









SACRED ANNALS :

OR,

RESEARCHES

INTO

THE HISTORY AND RELIGION OF MANKIND.

VOL. I.

THE PATRIARCHAL AGE.

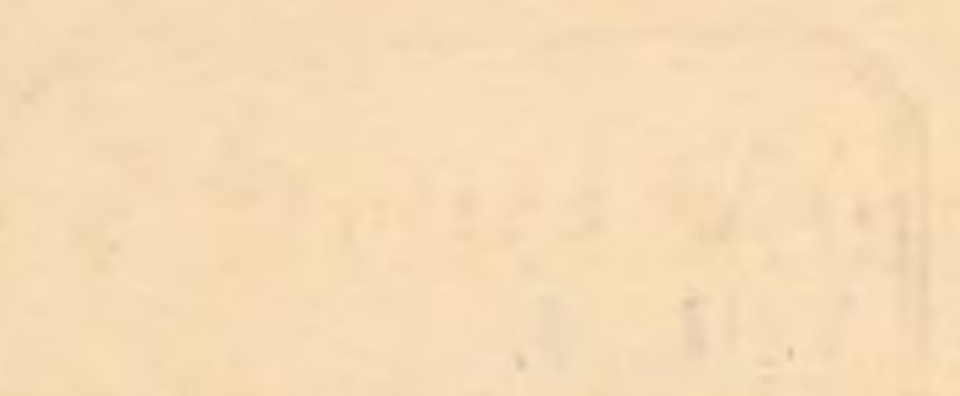


THE HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES OF

THE CITY OF LONDON

IN THE MIDDLE AGES

BY JOHN RICHARDSON



THE HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES OF



THE PATRIARCHAL AGE :

OR,

THE HISTORY AND RELIGION OF MANKIND,

FROM

THE CREATION

TO

THE DEATH OF ISAAC :

DEDUCED FROM THE WRITINGS OF MOSES AND OTHER  
INSPIRED AUTHORS ;

AND ILLUSTRATED BY COPIOUS REFERENCES  
TO THE ANCIENT RECORDS, TRADITIONS, AND MYTHOLOGY  
OF THE HEATHEN WORLD.

BY GEORGE SMITH, F.S.A.,

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OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF LITERATURE, OF THE IRISH  
ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY, &c.

LONDON :

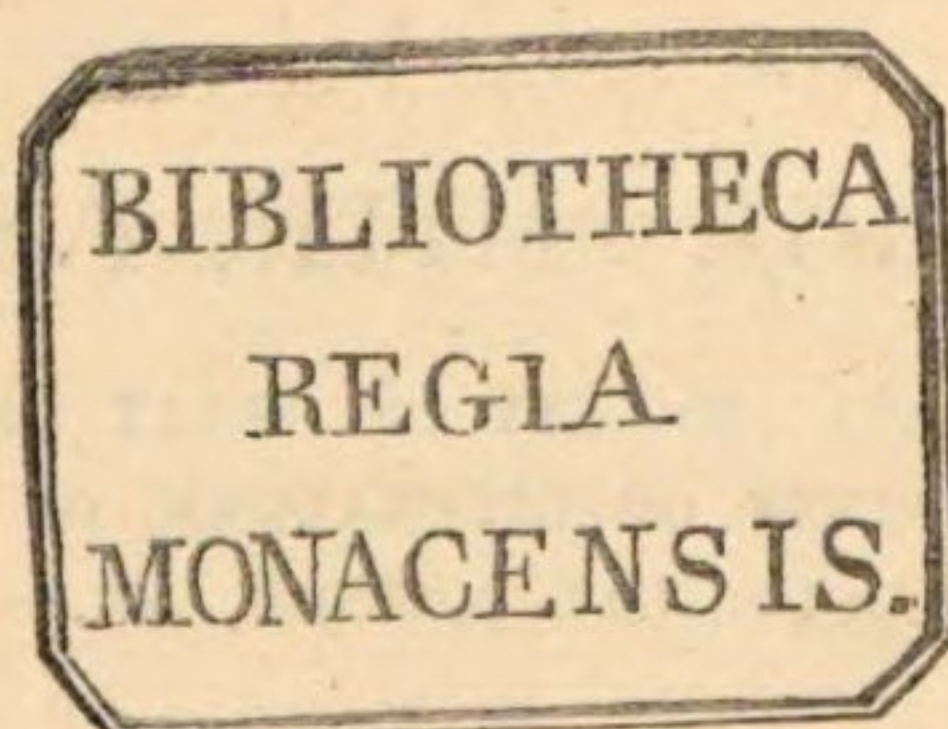
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## PREFACE.

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TWENTY years ago, the author of the following pages deeply felt the want of a volume which should exhibit a concentrated view of the history of the early ages of the world, contained in the Mosaic writings, and in the records and traditions of Heathen nations; and which, at the same time, should present this body of information in a manner truly religious, recognising throughout the supreme authority of holy scripture and the great principles of revealed religion. After long and diligent inquiry, he could meet with no work of this description, and was consequently compelled, for the satisfaction of his own mind, to commence a course of reading which embraced the early portions of scripture history, the difficulties of which he endeavoured to solve by a reference to the works of the various commentators and biblical critics to which he had access. In this study he had not proceeded far, before he was startled with the remark of an intelligent friend with whom he was one day conversing on the chronology and history of the Pentateuch, and who, in reply to some observation on the subject, said, "However consistent with itself the chronology of scripture may be, it stands in direct opposition to the records of every ancient nation; and this is a fact generally admitted by the learned." This remark led him to an enlarged course of reading, embracing the early history of the primitive nations, and the traditions and mythology of the Heathen world, especially of such as tended in any degree to its elucidation. Having, during the progress of these investigations, carefully noted down his observations on the most important topics, he ultimately



found that he had done much toward providing matter for such a volume as in his earlier days he had so greatly needed. Notwithstanding the number of books recently published on cognate subjects, he considers the want still to exist which he had formerly so severely felt; and he has, therefore, to the best of his ability, endeavoured to supply the *desideratum*.

The preceding remarks will have prepared the mind of the reader for appreciating the author's design in the production of this volume. His first and ruling idea was to arrive at the TRUTH respecting the origin and early history of the human race. Two reasons induced him to make the Bible his text-book throughout the inquiry. FIRST, he saw that, in reference to several important topics, no light could possibly be obtained, except through Divine revelation: this is the case with regard to the origin of mankind, the Divine purpose respecting the human race, and man's future destiny. On these subjects, if any information is attainable, it must be through explicit communications from the Author and Governor of the universe. SECONDLY, the volume of inspiration is the only source of information which we know to be unalloyed by error and unadulterated by fiction. For these reasons, the scriptural account has been regarded as of paramount authority. But while it has been the primary object of the author to give a *true* account of this portion of history, it has been no less his design to make it as full and complete as possible; and, for this purpose, every profane historian of eminence, whose writings contain allusions, however brief, to the events connected with the earliest ages, has been consulted; the annals of every ancient nation have been examined; the cloudy regions of tradition, mythology, and fable have been explored. From all these sources, information has been obtained, which the author has endeavoured to concentrate into the smallest compass consistent with explicitness, and to reduce the whole into a homogeneous



narrative, which may present a complete view of the history and religion of the age.

The author likewise freely avows, that it has been throughout an integral part of his design to impart to the work a decidedly religious character. He has endeavoured not only to unite in the same investigation the history of every age with its religion, but to do this in a decidedly religious manner; and, avoiding all sectarian peculiarities, uniformly to illustrate the grand elements of evangelical godliness, and to show their powerful efficiency in forming the finest characters of sacred antiquity, the most perfect specimens of exalted virtue and moral grandeur of which our frail humanity, under the benignant ducture of Divine teaching, has at any time been capable.

With respect to the plan of the work, few words may suffice. A general view of the subject soon rendered apparent the necessity of settling the chronology of those primeval times, and of exhibiting at least a general and connected outline of the intelligence and learning possessed by the early generations of mankind, before we entered upon the history itself. This has been attempted in the "Preliminary Dissertation;" the conclusions at which we have arrived, from a careful examination of the whole subject, being, that the Septuagint chronology is alone entitled to our confidence; and that letters and learning were extensively cultivated and diffused in those ages of which we have undertaken to treat, and were most probably co-eval with our race, and consequently of Divine origin.

Another part of the plan may require a passing notice. In referring to the various works which the author had occasion to quote, he had to choose between giving the substance of those extracts in his own language, or citing the very words of the writers themselves. He was strongly advised by some literary friends to adopt the former course, as a means of preventing those frequent



alternations of style, and breaks in the narrative and argument, which must necessarily result from the other. After mature consideration, it has, however, been decided to submit to these inconveniences, and act upon the plan of citing from all the important treatises which have been consulted, either in the exact phraseology employed in them, or in approved translations. The principal reason for preferring this mode has been, that it presents to the reader, in all their integrity, the authorities on which any reliance has been placed; and thus affords every one the means of judging of their value, and appreciating their true character, to an extent that would have been impossible if their substance had been incorporated into the narrative, and a mere reference to the authorities had been made at the foot of the page. Although the adoption of this course may render the volume less acceptable to some persons, it is hoped that this defect, if such it be, is more than counterbalanced by its deriving from the same cause, notwithstanding its limited size, the character of a cyclopædia of all that is certainly known of the history and religion of that early period.

The author did not at first contemplate the prosecution of his researches beyond the present volume; but he has, during the progress of his labour, been so convinced of the utility and importance of a similar investigation of the history and religion of the period from the death of Isaac to the birth of Christ, that he has resolved to carry his purpose into effect, and to complete it in two other volumes as nearly as possible of the same size as the present; one treating of the History and Religion of the Jewish Commonwealth from its commencement to the birth of Christ; the other containing the collateral History and Religion of the Gentile nations. Thus, while the work will contain three separate and independent treatises on different portions of History, each being complete within itself,



the whole will form an Epitome of the History and Religion of the World from the Creation to the Birth of Christ.

The author has deeply felt the inconvenience of being situated at a distance from all valuable public libraries ; but, thrown solely on his own resources, he has spared neither labour nor expense to render the volume useful to the world. It is the first desire of his heart that scriptural religion and increasing knowledge may be inseparably united, and proceed onward, till they speedily triumph over all ignorance and error. To the great cause of the instruction and moral amelioration of our species, the book is, with unaffected anxiety, most heartily and sincerely devoted.

TREVU, CAMBORNE,  
*March 4th, 1847.*



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TABLE

TABLE showing the results of the experiments conducted at the Agricultural Station, during the year 1882, in relation to the growth of the various crops, and the effect of the different manures and treatments.

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## PRELIMINARY DISSERTATION.

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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS: Importance of having clear Views of the Chronology of any Period, and of the intellectual Character of the People, for the understanding of their History. PART I. THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE PATRIARCHAL AGE: The Difficulty of the Subject—The three ancient Versions of Scripture: their separate and independent Character: their chronological Disagreement—NECESSITY OF ADOPTING A SOUND SYSTEM OF CHRONOLOGY. (I.) WHETHER THESE SEVERAL VERSIONS EVER AGREED IN THEIR CHRONOLOGY; and, if so, which retains the primitive Numbers—The Septuagint at first agreed with the then existing Hebrew, shown by reference to Philo, Demetrius, Eupolemus, and Josephus: also by Evidence from the New Testament—The Septuagint has now the same Numbers. (II.) WHETHER ANY OF THE VERSIONS HAVE BEEN CORRUPTED IN THIS RESPECT. Proof that the Hebrew has, from the Circumstances of the Case—The Fact attested by early Christian Fathers: proved by reference to various Texts—Ample Motives for this Course shown. (III.) EXAMINATION OF THE ACCURACY OF THE SEPTUAGINT. Traditional History: Testimony of several eminent Authors—General Observations. PART II. LEARNING, LITERATURE, AND SCIENCE, IN THE EARLY AGES OF THE WORLD. Absurd Theories of Philosophers with respect to LANGUAGE—The primitive State of Man not one of Ignorance and Barbarism, but of intellectual Grandeur—Inquiry into the Origin of alphabetical Characters: their Use traced up to the Deluge: in Use before Hieroglyphics—Proofs from Tradition, History, and eminent Authors. EARLY LITERATURE: its Existence proved from Scripture Facts,—profane Records,—and ancient Tradition. THE EXISTENCE OF SCIENCE during this Period proved by the History of Astronomy and other Evidence. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS.

BEFORE we attempt to furnish a consecutive History of the Patriarchal Age, and of its Religion, it will be necessary to institute an inquiry into its chronology and learning. Unless we obtain a tolerably correct knowledge of the progression of events, and of the times when they respectively occurred, it will be impossible to form such an arrangement of these materials as shall be either consistent or intelligible. This remark must, to a certain extent, be true of any period; but it is more especially so with respect to that which we have now to consider. Dr. Russell has not scru-



pled to assert that "to the reader who shall enter in earnest upon the inquiries which are pursued in this work, it will soon become manifest that, in most cases, the study of ancient history resolves itself into a series of chronological disquisitions respecting the origin of nations, and the relative antiquity of events."\* The absolute necessity of obtaining this information will be further evident, if we consider the true character of history, which, says an eminent ancient author, "carries our knowledge beyond the vast and devouring space of numberless years; thus triumphing over time, and making us, though living at an immense distance, in a manner, eye-witnesses of all the events which have occasioned astonishing revolutions in the world." It will be at once perceived, that history can only fully sustain this important character when her pages are arranged under the guidance, and her facts are illuminated by the light, of clear and obvious chronological truth. We cannot with propriety apply this definition to any enumeration of facts, however carefully collected; or to any narration of events, however elegantly written; if we are left in ignorance of the period when they happened, or the order of time in which they occurred.

Nor is it of less importance that we should possess some distinct information as to the mental character, measure of cultivation, and amount of learning, of the people whose history we peruse. In no other case does this apply with the same force, as in the present. We propose to discuss the origin of human society, to narrate the events which took place in the first families of mankind. Before we can enter on a work of this nature, it is necessary for us to decide between the two conflicting theories which have been propounded respecting the primitive intellectual character of man:—to ascertain whether, created in knowledge and in true holiness, he at first stood forth possessed of the highest intellectual powers, endowed with the noblest attributes of mind, prepared to enter upon and

\* DR. RUSSELL'S "Connexion of Sacred and Profane History," vol. i. p. 13.



successfully to pursue a course of vigorous and continued improvement :—or whether, emerging at first from mere animal existence, he gradually arose to be a reasoning and cultivated creature :—in a word, whether intellectual dignity was the original character of humanity, and subsequent barbarism the consequence of sinful practices and vicious pursuits ; or whether, commencing his existence in barbarism, he, by the evolution of some unknown energy, subsequently burst the bands of his natural state, and gradually arose to his present dignified and intelligent position. These are questions of importance ; they affect every step of our historical career, and demand our utmost efforts to elicit the truth respecting them, and to place it in the strongest aspect before the mind of the reader.

In the hope of contributing to this desirable end, we have chosen to investigate these subjects in a Preliminary Dissertation, rather than trust to occasional notes, or digressive disquisitions.

## PART I.

### AN INQUIRY INTO THE TRUE CHRONOLOGY OF THE PATRIARCHAL AGE.

THIS period contains a number of prominent circumstances and events, to which no historical age can furnish a parallel. Looking on the pages of Moses, we see the family of the first man ; the rise and progress of society ; the prevalence of wickedness ; the destruction of the old world by a flood of waters, and the preservation of Noah and his family in an ark ; the re-peopling of the world ; the general dispersion ; the commencement of the most important ancient empires ; the call of Abraham ; the miraculous destruction of the cities of the plain ; and the special appointment of a part of the Abrahamic family to sustain a peculiar covenant relation to the MOST HIGH. These are events replete with interest, even if singly and separately considered ; but they also stand before us as inseparably



interwoven with the history and religion of the world. While, therefore, we ought to know the chronological order and position of the events of this period, that we may understand its history; it equally concerns us to obtain this knowledge, if we would have a right understanding of an important portion of the holy scriptures, or be able to trace, with any confidence, the harmony of the sacred narrative with other authentic remains of ancient history.

Those who have taken only a superficial view of the subject, may regard the attainment of this information as an easy acquisition, Moses having recorded, with uniform care, the particulars of the duration of the several generations throughout this period. A very brief examination will, however, prove that this judgment is erroneous, and that the subject is encumbered with great and special difficulties. It may also be observed, that these do not arise from lack of information, nor from mere discrepancy in the accounts of different authors, respecting any isolated events: difficulties like these we shall meet with in every part of history; but here, and here alone, we have to decide upon the respective claims of great chronological systems, each of which has been received and defended by learned men, and appears to be sanctioned by many collateral circumstances, but which are entirely irreconcilable with each other. This will be evident when we state that, according to the shortest computation, one thousand nine hundred and forty-eight years elapsed from the Creation to the birth of Abraham; the second makes this period two thousand two hundred and forty-nine years; while the longest assigns to it three thousand three hundred and thirty-four years; showing a difference of one thousand three hundred and eighty-six years on this period. Yet each of these systems is based upon holy scripture; the difference which we have exhibited being found to exist in the numbers *now* contained in the different classes of copies which have been preserved to the present time.

To explain this to those who have not studied the subject, it will be necessary to observe, that, for some time before



the introduction of Christianity, the professors of the Mosaic religion had been divided into three distinct and independent communities. Each of these had a temple as the centre of their worship ; a recognised copy of the holy scriptures \* in their own language ; and each regarded the other two with feelings of the most rancorous jealousy. These were,

1. The Hebrew Jews, who worshipped at Jerusalem, and who are generally supposed to have used the square characters of the present Hebrew Bible.

2. The Samaritans, whose temple was situated on Mount Gerizim, who used a Syriac dialect with Phenician characters.

3. The Hellenistic Jews of Egypt, whose usual language and characters were Greek. They had their temple at Heliopolis.

Each of these sects, as we have already observed, had copies of the books of Moses in their own language, which, although remarkable for their general agreement in other particulars, are found to differ, to the serious extent above stated, with respect to the chronology of this period. Before we proceed to exhibit and discuss these discrepancies, it may be proper to state, that the several copies of scripture already mentioned, invariably adopt the same mode in the communication of the historical chronology of the early ages : namely, by giving the number of years each patriarch lived prior to the birth of his eldest son ; thus placing before us a regular chain, composed of measured links, extending in continued succession from the creation of the world to the birth of Isaac.

As we shall have to decide on the claims of these several authorities, and select that for our guide which appears to be best authenticated, we append in a tabular form the information which they, and also Josephus, the eminent Jewish historian, furnish on this branch of our inquiry.

\* The Samaritans received no part of holy writ except the five books of Moses.



TABLE, No. 1.

## THE GENERATIONS OF THE ANTEDILUVIAN PATRIARCHS.

|                        | Lived before the<br>Birth of eldest Son. |      |      |      | After the Birth of<br>the eldest Son. |      |      |      | Total Length<br>of Life. |      |      |      |
|------------------------|------------------------------------------|------|------|------|---------------------------------------|------|------|------|--------------------------|------|------|------|
|                        | Heb.                                     | Sam. | Sep. | Jos. | Heb.                                  | Sam. | Sep. | Jos. | Heb.                     | Sam. | Sep. | Jos. |
| Adam.....              | 130                                      | 130  | 230  | 230  | 800                                   | 800  | 700  | 700  | 930                      | 930  | 930  | 930  |
| Seth .....             | 105                                      | 105  | 205  | 205  | 807                                   | 807  | 707  | 707  | 912                      | 912  | 912  | 912  |
| Enos .....             | 90                                       | 90   | 190  | 190  | 815                                   | 815  | 715  | 715  | 905                      | 905  | 905  | 905  |
| Cainan .....           | 70                                       | 70   | 170  | 170  | 840                                   | 840  | 740  | 740  | 910                      | 910  | 910  | 910  |
| Mahalaleel .....       | 65                                       | 65   | 165  | 165  | 830                                   | 830  | 730  | 730  | 895                      | 895  | 895  | 895  |
| Jared .....            | 162                                      | 62   | 162  | 162  | 800                                   | 785  | 800  | 800  | 962                      | 847  | 962  | 962  |
| Enoch .....            | 65                                       | 65   | 165  | 165  | 300                                   | 300  | 200  | 200  | 365                      | 365  | 365  | 365  |
| Methuselah .....       | 187                                      | 67   | 187  | 187  | 782                                   | 653  | 782  | 782  | 969                      | 720  | 969  | 969  |
| Lamech .....           | 182                                      | 53   | 188  | 182  | 595                                   | 600  | 565  | 595  | 777                      | 653  | 753  | 777  |
| Noah at the Flood..... | 600                                      | 600  | 600  | 600  |                                       |      |      |      |                          |      |      |      |
| To the Flood .....     | 1656                                     | 1307 | 2262 | 2256 |                                       |      |      |      |                          |      |      |      |

TABLE, No. 2.

## THE GENERATIONS OF THE POSTDILUVIAN PATRIARCHS.

|                            | Lived before the<br>Birth of eldest Son. |      |      |      | After the<br>birth of the<br>eldest Son. |      |      | Total Length<br>of Life. |      |      |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------|------|------|------|------------------------------------------|------|------|--------------------------|------|------|
|                            | Heb.                                     | Sam. | Sep. | Jos. | Heb.                                     | Sam. | Sep. | Heb.                     | Sam. | Sep. |
| Shem after the Flood ..... | 2                                        | 2    | 2    | 12   | 500                                      | 500  | 500  | 600                      | 600  | 600  |
| Arphaxad.....              | 35                                       | 135  | 135  | 135  | 403                                      | 303  | 403  | 438                      | 438  | 538  |
| Cainan .....               |                                          |      | 130  |      |                                          |      | 330  |                          |      | 460  |
| Salah.....                 | 30                                       | 130  | 130  | 130  | 403                                      | 303  | 303  | 433                      | 433  | 433  |
| Eber .....                 | 34                                       | 134  | 134  | 134  | 430                                      | 270  | 270  | 464                      | 404  | 404  |
| Peleg .....                | 30                                       | 130  | 130  | 130  | 209                                      | 109  | 209  | 239                      | 239  | 339  |
| Reu .....                  | 32                                       | 132  | 132  | 130  | 207                                      | 107  | 207  | 239                      | 239  | 339  |
| Serug.....                 | 30                                       | 130  | 130  | 132  | 200                                      | 100  | 200  | 230                      | 230  | 330  |
| Nahor .....                | 29                                       | 79   | 79   | 120  | 119                                      | 69   | 129  | 148                      | 148  | 208  |
| Terah .....                | 70                                       | 70   | 70   | 70   | 135                                      | 75   | 135  | 205                      | 145  | 205  |
| To birth of Abraham .....  | 292                                      | 942  | 1072 | 993  |                                          |      |      |                          |      |      |

The several numbers of the Hebrew text, the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Septuagint, and of Josephus, are here placed in comparison; and it will be necessary, before entering more directly on their respective degrees of authenticity, to communicate some information concerning the history of these several versions of holy writ.



The opinion now generally received among critics, respecting the existing HEBREW text, is, that it was written in its present character, which is Chaldean, about the time of Ezra. It is well known, that from the earliest ages, the book of the law was guarded with great care, and was commanded to be laid up “*by the side of the ark.*”\* Here it undoubtedly remained until the destruction of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar, with the exception of a short season when the idolatrous practices of certain kings of Judah rendered it necessary to conceal it: in the days of Josiah it was again restored to its place.†

We have no means of ascertaining the fate of this volume at the time when the temple was destroyed; but we know that copies of the sacred books were held by pious Jews during the captivity, and that Ezra the scribe, who so impressively brought the law before the people, caused a carefully-collated copy to be made for the service of the new temple, as well as for general use. This opinion has been violently contested; and much reliance has been placed on the silence of Ezra himself, Nehemiah, and Josephus, with respect to the alleged fact. But an eminent biblical critic has well replied, that “to these hypothetical reasonings we may oppose the constant tradition of the Jewish church, uncontradicted both by their enemies and by Christians, that Ezra, with the assistance of the members of the Great Synagogue, (among whom were the prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi,) did collect as many copies of the sacred writings as he could, and from them sent forth a correct edition of the canon of the Old Testament, with the exception of his own writings, the book of Nehemiah, and the prophecy of Malachi, which were subsequently annexed to the canon by Simon the Just, who is said to have been the last of the Great Synagogue. In this Esdrine text, the errors of former copyists were corrected, and Ezra, being himself an inspired writer, added in several places, throughout the

\* Deut. xxxi. 26. Not *in* the side of the ark. See KENNICOTT'S “Dissertations,” diss. ii. p. 298.

† *Ibid.* p. 299.



books of this edition, what appeared necessary to illustrate, connect, or complete them.”\*

It is further to be observed, that, on this occasion, Ezra introduced the present Hebrew character into the sacred text. This point has also been contested by learned men ; it appears now, however, to be satisfactorily established. “From a passage in Eusebius’s Chronicle, and another in Jerome, it was inferred by Joseph Scaliger, that Ezra, when he reformed the Jewish church, transcribed the ancient characters of the Hebrews into the square letters of the Chaldeans : and this was done for the use of those Jews who, being born during the captivity, knew no other alphabet than that of the people among whom they had been educated. Consequently, the old character which we call Samaritan, fell into total disuse. This opinion Scaliger supported by passages from both the Talmuds, as well as from rabbinical writers, in which it is expressly affirmed, that such characters were adopted by Ezra. But the most decisive confirmation of this point is to be found in the ancient Hebrew coins, which were struck before the Captivity, and even previously to the Dispersion of the ten tribes. The characters engraven on all of them are manifestly the same with the modern Samaritan.”†

The origin of the present Hebrew text appears, therefore, in this manner to be satisfactorily ascertained.

The text thus produced, remained without material alteration until about the time of Christ ; when, in consequence of the prevalence of the Greek language, the Hebrew scriptures were “almost entirely neglected.” This state of things continued till the second century of the Christian era, when both Jews and Christians applied themselves to the study of the Hebrew Bible with great zeal ; and three Greek versions were undertaken and completed. One of these was for the special use of the Jews, and was translated by Aquila, an apostate from Christianity to Judaism. The

\* HORNE’S “Introduction to the critical Study of the Holy Scriptures,” vol. ii. part i. p. 34.

† *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 7.



Hebrew text, as it existed in the East from the year A.D. 200 to the end of the fifth century, is given by Origen, in his Hexapla. During this period many discrepancies were observed in the Hebrew manuscripts which excited attention; and learned Jews now began to collate copies and collect various readings, which, being distributed into classes, appeared in the Jerusalem Talmud about the year A.D. 280.

After the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and the consequent dispersion of the Jews, some of those who were settled in the East applied themselves to the cultivation of literature, and opened schools, in which they communicated a knowledge of the scriptures. One of the most celebrated of these academies was at Babylon, and another at Tiberias. The doctors of this latter school, about the beginning of the sixth century, agreed to revise the sacred text; and, after immense literary labour, they published in one book what they considered to be the true reading and interpretation of scripture. This consisted of two parts: the true reading, which they called the *Masorah*; and the true interpretation, named the *Mishna* and *Gemara*. These writers, who have been called "Masorites," also divided the scriptures into sections and verses; and since their edition, the Hebrew Bible has remained essentially the same, as far as relates to this subject. It is believed that no copy of this version, at present in existence, is more than nine hundred years old.\*

The SAMARITAN copy of the Pentateuch was used by the people whose name it bears. They were descendants of an intermixture of the ten tribes with Gentile nations, and were generally considered a Jewish sect. Their origin rendered them odious to the Jews, who, on their return from the Babylonish captivity, refused to recognise them as Jewish citizens; and, in consequence, they erected a temple on Mount Gerizim, and instituted sacrifices according to the Mosaic law.

This people rejected all the sacred books, except the

\* HORNE'S "Introduction," vol. ii. pp. 33—40.



writings of Moses. Of these they preserved copies in the original Hebrew character. The Samaritan Pentateuch, although known to Eusebius, and other writers of the fourth and fifth centuries, was afterwards so completely consigned to oblivion, that for a thousand years it was entirely unknown, until its very existence was disputed. Several copies, however, were afterwards discovered, and different editions of it have since been printed.

The SEPTUAGINT, or first Greek version of the scriptures, was made at Alexandria in Egypt. We shall not transcribe the disputed history of this translation, but briefly state what is universally admitted concerning it. It was made from the original Hebrew, about B.C. 280; it was recognised as a correct version by the highest Jewish authorities, and by their sanction introduced into the synagogues; and it remained thus unchallenged for nearly four hundred years, as a faithful translation of the original scriptures.

Having given this brief sketch of these several scripture authorities, we now proceed to point out more particularly the chronological discrepancies which they contain.

Referring to table, No. 1, and Gen. v. 2—26; vii. 11, the reader will at once perceive that, according to the authorized English translation, and the Hebrew text from which it was made, one thousand six hundred and fifty-six years elapsed from the Creation to the Flood; that the Samaritan makes this period but one thousand three hundred and seven years, the difference of three hundred and forty-nine years arising from the omission of one hundred years from the age of Jared prior to the birth of his eldest son, and by a similar omission of one hundred and twenty years from the age of Methuselah, and of one hundred and twenty-nine years from the age of Lamech. Thus, by reducing the age of these patriarchs at the birth of their eldest sons, the entire term is abridged by the difference of three hundred and forty-nine years. On the other hand, by adding to the ages of the patriarchs, the Septuagint estimate of this period is greatly extended. From Adam to Mahalaleel, five successive generations, this version makes



each patriarch one hundred years older than the Hebrew. Jared is the same as the Hebrew, and both give one hundred years more than the Samaritan. In the case of Enoch the Septuagint has one hundred years more than the Hebrew or Samaritan. In that of Methuselah, the Septuagint and Hebrew agree, both being, as in the case of Jared, one hundred years more than the Samaritan; and, finally, in the case of Lamech, the Septuagint has six years more than the Hebrew, and one hundred and thirty-five more than the Samaritan; the Septuagint, on the whole period, giving us four hundred and six years more than the Hebrew, and nine hundred and ninety-five more than the Samaritan.

In the second table, which illustrates the post-diluvian period, we are first struck by the appearance of Cainan in the Septuagint table, which is not found in either the Hebrew or the Samaritan, and which gives an addition to the period of one hundred and thirty years. Then we find six successive patriarchs, according to the Hebrew, to whose ages prior to the birth of their eldest sons respectively, the Samaritan and the Septuagint agree in adding one hundred years each. Nahor follows; and to his age, in a similar manner, those two versions add fifty years: in the subsequent generations they all harmonize.

From these data it appears, that in the post-diluvian period the Hebrew gives us but two hundred and ninety-two years, while the Samaritan has nine hundred and forty-two, and the Septuagint one thousand and seventy-two years. This discrepancy will be sufficient to show the importance of the subject. These chronological differences are so great, that no historical scheme applicable to one, can be accommodated to the rest. They are sufficient to derange the entire scope and connexion of the historical records which refer to those times. In order, therefore, to obtain clear and consistent views of the history of the patriarchal age, we must carefully examine the whole subject, and adopt that chronological system which appears to be best entitled to our confidence.

In entering upon this task it may be well to observe, that



we feel quite warranted in regarding each of these versions, the Hebrew, the Samaritan, and the Septuagint, as so many genuine copies of holy scripture, subject alike to typographical errors, and alike exposed to vitiation from accident, ignorance, or wickedness. No one of these can fairly be called the original in respect of the others, regarded as translations or copies. It is true that the present Hebrew has come to us from the Esdrine text ; but, in the transit, it has passed through centuries of danger. With respect to the subject of chronology, to which our attention is specially directed, the numbers of this version possess a great advantage in the estimation of the English reader, in consequence of archbishop Usher having adopted that system, and of its being set forth in the authorized English translation of the scriptures. Yet this should not prevent us from attaching importance to the Samaritan version, possessing, as it undoubtedly does, an antiquity beyond any of our present Hebrew copies, coming to us probably in the original character of the Jewish people, and especially when a linguist and biblical critic of Dr. Kennicott's eminence places before us his deliberate judgment as to the course that should be pursued in respect of this subject. "Let," he observes, "the variations of all the manuscripts on each side be carefully collected, and then critically examined by the context and the ancient versions. If the Samaritan copy should be found in some places to correct the Hebrew, yet will the Hebrew copy in other places correct the Samaritan. *Each copy, therefore, is invaluable ; each copy, therefore, demands our pious veneration, and attentive study.* THE PENTATEUCH WILL NEVER BE UNDERSTOOD PERFECTLY, TILL WE ADMIT THE AUTHORITY OF BOTH." \*

But it may be alleged, that the Septuagint is undoubtedly a translation. We freely admit the fact ; but reply, that it is not a translation from our Hebrew Bible, coming to us, as the latter does, through the hands of the Masorite Jews. The Septuagint is a translation of the Hebrew scriptures as they were held by the Jews who lived under the second temple,

\* "Dissertations," diss. ii. p. 165.



and who at that time were the trustees to whom were committed the oracles of God. It is more than this: not only was its original the book of scripture as held by the then existing church of God, but the translation also received the unqualified approbation of that church. The high priest and the Sanhedrim approved the Septuagint, and authorized its use in all the synagogues where the Greek language was spoken.\* And we have reason to believe that this judgment was not given without careful investigation; for Philo-Judæus, who lived in the age of the apostles, asserts, "that the Hebrews who knew the Greek language, and the Greeks who understood the Hebrew, were so struck with admiration at the entire agreement between the original and the translation, that they not only adored them as sisters, but as one and the same, both in words and things; styling the translators not only accurate scholars, but inspired interpreters and prophets, who, with a singular purity of spirit, had entered into the very sentiments of Moses." †

We are now prepared to enter more particularly into the investigation of this important subject; and, in doing this, shall endeavour to ascertain,—

(I.) Whether at any period these several authorities agreed in their chronology; and, if so, whether any one of them at present retains the primitive numbers.

(II.) Whether there be any evidence to show that the numbers in any of the versions have been corrupted.

(III.) Whether an examination of these systems, as to their agreement with the general order of nature, their internal evidence of truth or falsehood, and their accordance with the general evidence of tradition and history, will warrant strong confidence in the genuineness of any one of these systems of numbers.

If we succeed in offering a satisfactory solution of these problems, we shall be prepared to come to some well-founded opinion on the whole subject.

(I.) We proceed with the first subject of inquiry. And

\* DR. HENRY OWEN'S "Inquiry," p. 6.

† PHILO-JUDÆUS, *De Vita Mosis*, lib. ii. p. 659. Edit. Francof. 1640.



here we call special attention to the important fact, that two hundred and eighty years before the Christian era it was decided, by the highest Jewish authorities, that the Septuagint translation was most exact. Let the testimony of Philo-Judæus, already quoted, be fairly regarded ;—let it be remembered that Philo was an eminent literary writer on sacred history : he must therefore have been well acquainted with the Hebrew scriptures, and with the Septuagint version. Can we, then, in such circumstances imagine that, either when the translation was made, or in the days of Philo, the Hebrew and Greek numbers differed by one thousand three hundred and eighty-six years ? Is it possible that either the Sanhedrim or the historian could have overlooked so important a discrepancy ?

This improbability amounts almost to an impossibility, when we consider that the Septuagint was not confined to the closets of the learned, but was generally known throughout the length and breadth of Judea, and was publicly read in the synagogues. That this had continued for many years, we have the strongest presumptive proof in the fact, that in those times the Hebrew and Septuagint chronology was the same.

But we do not rely on this single point. There is other evidence which not only goes to prove, that, down to the beginning of the first century, the Hebrew and Septuagint chronologies were identical ; but which also shows that the numbers then received were the same as are now found in the Septuagint.

Demetrius, who lived in the reign of Ptolemy the Fourth, about B.C. 220, wrote a history of the Jewish kings, which we find quoted by Alexander Polyhistor, and preserved in the volumes of Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea. In this work the author follows the chronology of the LXX., which, there is no doubt, was, at that time, the same with the Hebrew ; stating, that from Adam to the migration of Jacob's family into Egypt, there elapsed a period of three thousand six hundred and twenty-four years ; and that from the Flood to the same migration, the number of years was one thousand



three hundred and sixty. This statement agrees exactly with that of the Greek version ; for, according to it,

|                                                    | Years. |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------|
| From the Creation to the Deluge were .....         | 2226   |
| —— the Deluge to the birth of Abraham .....        | 1072   |
| —— the birth of Abraham to his leaving Haran ..... | 75     |
| —— thence to the migration of Jacob's family ..... | 215    |
|                                                    | <hr/>  |
|                                                    | 3624   |
|                                                    | <hr/>  |

This agreement is very remarkable ; and as Demetrius wrote only about sixty-six years after the Septuagint translation was made, it is not to be supposed that at so early a period any material differences between the Greek and the Hebrew scriptures could have taken place ; \* nor, supposing the Septuagint numbers to have differed from the Hebrew at first, can we imagine that in this brief space a new and corrupt system could, by possibility, have obtained such authority as to be selected by an historian for a guide, in preference to old, well known, and authentic records.

Eupolemus, also, who wrote about fifty years after the last-mentioned author, states, that it was five thousand one hundred and forty-nine years from Adam to the fifth year of Demetrius, king of Syria. This agrees exactly with the reckoning of Demetrius, and the chronology of the Septuagint.

Still more important is the testimony of Josephus. This author, who was himself of the family of the priests, was perfectly acquainted with the Hebrew scriptures, as well as with the Septuagint, of which version he has given us an account. He published his great work on Jewish history and antiquities, A. D. 90 ; and assures us, not only that the Septuagint was carefully examined and publicly approved, but also that he had translated the substance of his history from the Hebrew scriptures. Yet, with few and unimportant exceptions, his chronology agrees with the Septuagint, as may be seen by a reference to the tables.

\* RUSSELL'S "Connexion," vol. i. p. 66.



We have, therefore, a series of testimonies extending from about sixty years after the Septuagint translation was made, to the latter part of the first century, a period of above three hundred years, which unite in affirming the numbers of the LXX., and—from the circumstances in which the translators of this version were placed, and their entire acquaintance with the Hebrew—thereby warranting the conclusion that at this time the discrepancies which harass us had no existence, and that both versions agreed in teaching the chronology of the modern Septuagint.

There is another branch of evidence which we regard as of the greatest importance. During the first century, the New-Testament scriptures were written under the plenary inspiration of the Holy Ghost. The authors of these books frequently refer to the Old-Testament writings; and we may reasonably conclude that, in regard to chronology, and every other subject, they would certainly quote from the purest text of Moses and the prophets; yet, when we examine such quotations, as far as they relate to the subject under consideration, we find them uniformly at variance with the present Hebrew text, and in agreement with the LXX. We call attention to a few instances.

The first text to which we refer is that in Luke iii. 35, 36: "Sala, which was the son of Cainan, which was the son of Arphaxad." The corresponding passage in Gen. xi. 12, is thus given in the Hebrew Bible: "And Arphaxad lived five and thirty years, and begat Salah;" omitting entirely the name and generation of Cainan. The Septuagint, however, renders the passage thus: "And Arphaxad lived a hundred and thirty-five years, and begot Cainan; .....and Cainan lived a hundred and thirty years, and begot Sala." The Septuagint, therefore, is found in perfect agreement with the Gospel, while the Hebrew and Samaritan omit the generation.

This is a point of great consequence. We do not mean to argue from this fact, that the circumstance now stated invests the Septuagint generally with an authentic character. We do not contend that it legitimatizes the general scheme



of chronology which that version exhibits. But we do think that this quotation, or confirmation of the LXX. by the inspired evangelist, authenticates this particular text. We have never heard any doubt cast on this passage of St. Luke. It is found in every copy and version ; and, if written by the sacred penman, we cannot see how a believer in real inspiration can doubt the truth of the fact recorded in the Septuagint, or refuse to admit that we have here an evident omission in the Hebrew. Our view on this subject is strikingly confirmed by the able translator of the "Septuagint Version into English." In his preface, he says : "In reply, then, to the question, 'How far does the apostolic quotation of a part of the Septuagint, warrant the inspiration of the whole?' we venture to state, that it is no warrant at all. What the Holy Ghost touches it hallows : beyond this, the translation, whatever its excellence, comes into our hands as the work of fallible man." \* The passage to which we have just adverted has been so hallowed, and is therefore undoubtedly authentic.

We next turn to Exodus xii. 40, which, according to the present Hebrew, reads : "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years." This is clearly contrary to fact, as they dwelt in Egypt but two hundred and fifteen years. This text has consequently given immense trouble to commentators, who have been greatly puzzled to find a solution of the difficulty. The Septuagint does this by supplying an omission in the text : it reads, "And the sojourning of the children of Israel, while they sojourned in the land of Egypt *and the land of Canaan*, was four hundred and thirty years." This true and consistent sense is confirmed by apostolic authority ; for St. Paul makes this period extend from the promise made to Abraham, until the exodus. (Gal. iii. 17.)

There is another passage which, in fact, contains the only chronological statement found in the New Testament. We

\* "The Septuagint, in English, by SIR L. C. L. BRENTON, BART." chap. v. Bagster.



will give it, and its bearing upon our argument, in the words of a celebrated writer. Having referred to the evidence of Demetrius and Eupolemus, already given, he observes: "The united testimony of these two eminent historians carries with it a strong degree of conviction in favour of the agreement which must have subsisted, in their time, between the original Hebrew scriptures and the authorized version, in reference at least to the relative antiquity and succession of events. Nor is there any ground to suspect, that the smallest change was introduced into either text during a lapse of more than three hundred years afterwards: for the only chronological statement that is handed down to us in the New Testament corresponds with the numbers of the Septuagint, while it is directly at variance with those of the modern Hebrew. We allude to the narrative of St. Paul, as recorded in the thirteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. This holy man, when addressing the Jews at Antioch, reminded them, that God had brought their fathers out of Egypt with a high hand, 'and about the time of forty years suffered he their manners in the wilderness. And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Chanaan, he divided their land to them by lot. And after that he gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet. And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years. And when he had removed him, he raised up David to be their king.'

"The apostle here declares, that from the division of the land 'until Samuel the prophet, was about the space of four hundred and fifty years.' If to that sum we add the years that passed between the exode and the partition of the promised inheritance, and also the time that the government of the Hebrews was exercised by Samuel, Saul, and David, with the first three years of Solomon, we shall find that, in estimating the period from the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt to the foundation of the temple, the historical outline given by St. Paul accords precisely



with the numbers of Josephus, and consequently with the numbers contained in the Greek and Hebrew scriptures, as they existed in his days.

|                                            |     |        |
|--------------------------------------------|-----|--------|
| “ From exode to the division of lands..... | 46  | years. |
| —— division to Samuel .....                | 450 | —      |
| —— government of Samuel .....              | 12  | —      |
| —— reign of Saul .....                     | 40  | —      |
| —— reign of David .....                    | 40  | —      |
| —— first three years of Solomon .....      | 3   | —      |

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“ Now Josephus relates, that the temple was begun in the fourth year of Solomon, five hundred and ninety-two years after the people were delivered from Egyptian bondage ; and it is worthy of especial remark, that, in regard to the dates of these memorable occurrences, we have found the judgment of the historian confirmed by the narrative of an inspired apostle. Such a complete agreement in regard to very ancient epochs is hardly to be expected ; but when it does occur, it leaves no room for doubt that the several writers must have followed an authority essentially the same ; and that the archives whence they derived their materials had not yet been tampered with by the deceitful genius of hypothesis and controversy.” †

We might add to this evidence, but we forbear ; and with a few observations shall close this branch of the inquiry.

What are the facts which we have elicited ? That the Hebrew scriptures, as they were held by the Jewish church, were translated into Greek about two hundred and eighty years before the Christian era : that this translation obtained the universal approbation of the Jewish authorities : that for nearly four hundred years no whisper of complaint at unfaithfulness in the translators, or discrepancy in the chronological numbers, was heard from any quarter ; and that the most eminent historians living in different parts

\* Yet archbishop Usher, following the modern Hebrew, makes this period but four hundred and eighty years.

† RUSSELL'S “ Connexion,” vol. i. p. 67.



of this period, and the inspired writers of the New-Testament canon, unite in adopting a scheme of chronology, as then authorized, which is found to differ entirely from the present Hebrew computation, and to be in exact agreement with the Septuagint numbers. From such facts, what is the inevitable conclusion? Is it not that, during the time in question, the Hebrew and Greek copies must have taught the same chronology, and that, since then, the Hebrew has been altered to its present state?

Many circumstances might be referred to, which tend to strengthen these conclusions: we only advert to one fact. The Jews were a people, beyond all others, devoted to inquiries of this character; their "endless genealogies" naturally led them into chronological investigations. All the information of this kind which we have in the New Testament, is given in the most incidental manner; and, although referring to long and difficult periods, the writer or speaker places before us numbers which exactly agree with the sacred record, as in the case just quoted of Paul at Antioch. Among such a people, and in such circumstances, the present discrepancy could not have existed, and the result to which we have been conducted is therefore established.

In reply to the inquiry with which we commenced, we are now prepared to state, that, from 280 B.C. to the end of the first century, the Hebrew and Greek numbers were identical, and that both were then the same as we have them now in the Septuagint.

But it may be objected, that this conclusion leads to the inquiry, When, by whom, and for what purpose, could this alteration have been made? Before we enter upon this question, we may observe, that, whatever answer may ultimately be given to these queries, it is certain the alteration must have been intentional and systematic: it is absolutely impossible that the change could have been the result of accident or error. Every one who has carefully considered the subject must be of this opinion. We mention this, that the objection raised may possess its full strength.

(II.) Having said thus much, we proceed to our next in-



quiry ; namely, Whether there be any evidence to show that the numbers of any of the versions have been corrupted.

Our preceding investigations have already pointed out the Hebrew as the text which has in all probability been altered ; and the latter part of the first and the beginning of the second century of the Christian era, as the time when this was done.

We know that this opinion involves a serious charge against those who were then intrusted with this copy of the sacred oracles. We are also aware that an allegation of this kind ought not to be made hastily, or on slight grounds. And we are sure that, except on strong and indisputable evidence, it will not be regarded as proved. For, against whom is it preferred ? Against a people supposed to regard the scriptures generally, and the writings of Moses in particular, with universal and unbounded reverence. It has consequently been taken for granted, that the Jews could have had no motive for vitiating their sacred books, and that, even if they had, their high principles would have kept them above the influence of the temptation. It is our duty to cast light upon this subject.

It is necessary here to premise, that the time pointed out as the probable period of this alteration, was one of the most intense excitement to the Jewish people, and of peril to their cause. The descendants of Israel had previously endured disasters and defeat ; they had seen their glorious temple and monarchy destroyed, and had languished in captivity and exile. Yet, amid all this desolation and distress, they possessed a substantial foundation for hope in the promises of Jehovah : they fled to this refuge, and exercised a strong faith in their holy religion ; trusting to the hope of Israel, and believing in the promise of redemption to the seed of Abraham.

But now the case was altered. The promised Messiah had appeared, and had been rejected and crucified. During the first century after his resurrection, the progress of the gospel was most triumphant ; many of the Jews, and multitudes of the Gentiles, in every part of the Roman empire,



had embraced the cross, and acknowledged Jesus as their Saviour. The unbelieving Jews saw, in the progress and establishment of Christianity, the destruction of their proudest hopes. Jerusalem was again ruined ; and no Jeremiah appeared, commissioned by God to predict the period of their humiliation ; they had ceased to be the peculiar people of the Lord ; and their cause was thrown into their own hands. Conscious of the impotence of rage, they were compelled to meet Christian teachers in the field of controversy ; and here they were signally foiled. The common ground of appeal was, necessarily, the Old-Testament scriptures ; and these bore such unequivocal testimony to the facts and doctrines of the gospel, that to impugn them was only to afford more ample scope for demonstrating that Christ was indeed he “of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write.” What course then remained to those Jews, who still persisted in their unbelief ? One only was open to them. The Hebrew at this time was a learned language, few of the Jews being critically acquainted with it ; the scriptures in this tongue “were almost entirely neglected ;” the generality of the Jewish people and the Christians, having their knowledge of the scriptures confined to the Septuagint version. From this, our Lord and his apostles uniformly quoted ; from this source, the first Christian writers drew their proofs that Jesus was the Messiah, and that the Christian religion was indeed the new covenant which God had promised to make with all people. In these circumstances then, it is evident, that the Jewish elders had a powerful motive to allege that the Greek version did not accurately set forth the sense of the original scriptures ; and, as the Hebrew copies were almost entirely in their own hands, to make such alterations in them as should sustain the allegation.

No one who will review the whole of the circumstances, can doubt the existence of a strong temptation to this line of conduct : let us see whether there be sufficient proof that it was adopted. The case is one of great difficulty ; the charge is so serious, that ample evidence is required



to sustain it; the crime, if perpetrated at all, must have been done in secret; and, considering the circumstances of the time, and the character and position of the parties implicated, it must be no easy task to supply, after the lapse of so many centuries, the required proof. And yet we think, even under all these disadvantages, that we can adduce particulars which will establish our position.

First. We have at least presumptive evidence in the simple and acknowledged facts of the case. The Hebrew and Septuagint must originally have agreed: they now differ, and have differed since the second century. Whence could this variation arise? Certainly, not from the alteration of the Septuagint; for it was in extensive circulation; Jews and Christians alike held it in their hands. No conspiracy of a sect, therefore, could, if the attempt had been made, have done more than introduce a mass of various readings: it could not have effected a general alteration of particular passages, or vitiation of dates. With the Hebrew, the case was the reverse. The copies of this version were generally in the hands of priests and elders, who were united together by strong sympathy, and who, hating Christianity, felt every disposition to join their efforts in order to cast discredit upon it. The motive and the power lay entirely in the way of corrupting the Hebrew text.

Secondly. But it may be said, "If this had been done, there were some Christian teachers who possessed sufficient learning and zeal to have detected the imposture." Yes; and they have done so. We might quote many eminent Christian writers that lived near the age of the apostles who clearly asserted the fact, that this alteration of the scripture was effected by the Jews, and for this purpose. We select a few:—

Justin Martyr was a native of Palestine, and suffered martyrdom at Rome, A.D. 165. He entered largely into the controversy between the Jews and the Christians, and distinctly asserts that the former had actually erased several whole passages from the scriptures. Remarking on this, Mr. Whitaker observes: "This charge of Justin's against



the Jews stands unshaken in its authority. It rests firmly upon its own *substratum* of evidence. He has asserted it, who from his earliness had the power of knowing it. He has asserted it whose judgment cannot be deceived in such a substantial fact, and whose veracity is beyond all exception.”\*

Irenæus was a native of Asia Minor, enjoyed the friendship of the venerable Polycarp, and flourished in the second century. He assures us, that the Jews were so enraged, that “if they had known the Christians would have arisen and brought such testimonies from the scriptures against them, they would have made no scruple to have burnt their own scriptures.”†

Tertullian gives the same evidence.

Origen, who flourished in the beginning of the third century, and who was one of the most talented of the Christian fathers, unites with the preceding witnesses, and distinctly alleges that the Jews had corrupted their Hebrew scriptures.‡ What greatly enhances the value of this testimony, is the fact, that Origen was a most learned and industrious writer, and devoted twenty-eight years of his life to the compilation of his Octapla, which contained, in eight parallel columns, as many versions of holy scripture; a work which necessarily gave him a more accurate acquaintance with the various copies of the sacred writings than any other Christian writer had before attained.

Eusebius, also, who compiled his Ecclesiastical History in the fourth century, refers with approbation to the words of Justin already quoted; saying, that he “records certain prophetic declarations, in his discussion with Tryphon, showing that the Jews had expunged them from the scriptures.”§

The charge which we have thus endeavoured to substantiate is therefore not new;—it is not now for the first time preferred, eighteen centuries after the alleged event. It was

\* WHITAKER’S “Origin of Arianism,” p. 311.

† DR. HENRY OWEN’S “Inquiry,” p. 12.

‡ *Ibid.* pp. 15—33.

§ EUSEBIUS’S “Ecclesiastical History,” book iv. chap. 18.



made at the time, was publicly pressed by the most learned of the Christian fathers, and was believed even by Jerome, who manifested great partiality for the Jewish people. We only add, that the conduct of the Jewish rulers gives great countenance to the fact of their guilt; for, although their predecessors had publicly approved the Septuagint, they not only condemned it, but promoted three successive translations of the Old Testament into Greek by Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus, for the purpose of throwing discredit upon the translation of the LXX., and supplying a version in accordance with their own views.

But, Thirdly, a brief reference to some few passages of holy writ, and an examination of the published opinions of the Jewish elders, will fully confirm the view which has been taken on this subject. We do not propose to institute a comparison between the conflicting readings found in the Hebrew and Greek versions, any farther than may be necessary to our immediate object.

We first refer to Deut. xxvii. 4. It is plain, that, after the Israelites had crossed the Jordan, Jehovah commanded an altar to be built on one of two mountains, Ebal or Gerizim. At present Ebal is found in the Hebrew, Gerizim in the Samaritan. We need not now explain the strong national animosity involved in this question. Here a word is evidently changed for a particular purpose. On whichever of the parties the criminality rests, it was committed by those who professed the utmost religious veneration for the Pentateuch. The alteration must have been intentional. Here, then, we have an evident instance of the crime which we are investigating. After the elaborate scrutiny of Dr. Kennicott, few persons will doubt the accuracy of the present Samaritan text in this particular. On this, however, we do not insist; but maintain that here is an actual corruption of the sacred text made by Jews for party purposes.

It will be necessary, however, to cite some instances which bear directly upon our argument; and Dr. Owen has collected some of a startling character. We first refer to



Isaiah xlix. 6, which is quoted, Acts xiii. 47. The learned writer observes: "The point was this: When the Jews opposed the doctrine of St. Paul, and disdainfully rejected the offer of the gospel, he plainly told them that he would thenceforth turn to the Gentiles: not out of any resentment for the ill usage he had received from them, but in obedience to Christ's command, and for the accomplishment of the prophecy, 'I will set thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.' The Greek words in the Acts agree with the Septuagint; but the later Jews omitted the *caph* at the end of the first word, and added a *jod* to the end of the other, and thereby formed the present reading; which, literally translated, means, 'that my salvation may be *extended* to the ends of the earth;' that is, as they interpret the words, that the Jewish dispensation, often called 'the salvation of God,' may spread far and wide, and that proselytes may be gathered to it out of every nation and kingdom of the world; an interpretation suitable, indeed, to the notions of the Jews, but quite contrary to the doctrine of the apostle, and to the purpose for which he quoted the text." \* The Septuagint still retains the passage in precise agreement with the apostle's quotation.

We now direct attention to the same author's remarks on Amos ix. 11, 12, quoted Acts xv. 16, 17: "'After this I will return, and will build up again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; yea, I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men may seek after the Lord; even all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.' The original has precisely the same terms as the Septuagint, and it is evident that this reading at that time agreed with the Hebrew; and it is as evident, if this reading had not been the true one, the Jews of that time, who were so violently prejudiced against the consequence drawn from it, would never have been determined by it. But

\* DR. OWEN'S "Inquiry," pp. 70—72.



determined by it they were ; and therefore stand, in this dispute, on the side of the apostle against their descendants. For their descendants, resolutely bent on maintaining their opinions at all adventures, have since corrupted the text ; and by reducing it to the form it is in at present, have made it speak the following sentiment : ‘That they,’ namely, Jews, ‘may possess, or rule over, the remnant of Edom, and all the Heathen,’ &c. A fine compliment to themselves at the expense of the apostle’s judgment.” \*

The same writer cites another passage to the same effect : “St. Paul, in Rom. xv. 10, quotes Deut. xxxii. 43 : ‘Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people ;’ which perfectly agrees with the Septuagint. The Hebrew is, however, altered so as to read, ‘Praise, ye Gentiles, his people.’ ” †

This same text has suffered more serious violence than even that which has been just mentioned ; for, in Heb. i. 6, we have this very important quotation : “When he bringeth in his first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.” The margin very properly refers us to this passage, Deut. xxxii. 43 ; which, in the Septuagint, has the exact words : they are now completely expunged from the Hebrew text.‡

Again : St. Paul, in Heb. x. 5, says, “Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me.” The Septuagint version of Psalm xl. 6—8, agrees with this ; yet the Hebrew, by a very slight alteration of letters, is now made to read, “My ears hast thou opened,” instead of, “A body hast thou prepared me.” §

Passing over other cases which deserve attention, we satisfy ourselves with referring to Dr. Owen’s remarks on Jer. xi. 19 : “The Septuagint reading is, ‘I was like an innocent lamb, led to the slaughter :’ all the other versions concur in the same sense. The Hebrew is, however, so altered, that at

\* DR. OWEN’S “Inquiry,” p. 69 ; DR. ADAM CLARKE’S Commentary, Acts xv. 16, 17.

† DR. OWEN’S “Inquiry,” p. 85.

‡ DR. ADAM CLARKE’S Commentary, Heb. i. 6.

§ *Ibid.* Heb. x. 5.



present it reads, 'I am like a lamb, an ox shall be led to the slaughter.' This corruption we may charge on the Jews with more confidence, because the text, in conjunction with its parallel, Isai. liii. 7, bore so hard upon them, that, having nothing to answer, they betook themselves to blasphemy, and from blasphemy to forgery, the transition is easy." \*

It will have been observed, that these are not cases of mere various readings: such are to be found in the Hebrew, and still more frequently in the Septuagint. And this, perhaps, because what produced entire erasure in the former case, only partially succeeded in the latter, on account of the general dissemination of copies of this Greek version; but the passages to which we have referred, exhibit, without doubt, an intentional alteration of important texts, which, in their original purity, gave the clearest testimony to the Deity and sufferings of the Saviour, and to the calling of the Gentiles; and which, for the purpose of supporting the Christian cause, were triumphantly quoted by the inspired writers. Hence the case became desperate; and the alteration of the obnoxious texts was resorted to as the only means of resisting the truth.†

We are aware that many persons will receive the evidence we have adduced with extreme caution; especially those who have been taught to believe that the Jews have uniformly entertained unbounded reverence for the Old-Testament scriptures. For the information of such, we may strengthen what has been advanced, by briefly showing that this veneration has, in a great measure, vanished, under the influence of an inveterate opposition to Christianity. As an indubitable proof on this point, we observe, that the Babylonish Talmud positively asserts, "that it is right and lawful to take away one letter from the law, that the name of God may be publicly sanctified, or may not be publicly profaned!" The writings of the rabbies abound with proofs

\* DR. OWEN'S "Inquiry," p. 64.

† See more ample proofs in WHITAKER'S "Arianism," DR. OWEN'S "Inquiry," and DR. ADAM CLARKE'S Works, vol. x. pp. 136—144.



that this pernicious principle was not allowed to remain a dead letter ; numerous are the texts which their pupils were taught to alter and to modify to their own views, under the direction, "Read not so, but so." Above all, we have the conduct and recorded judgment of the Jewish elders. They virtually set aside the scriptures by the formal introduction of the written Cabbala. This Cabbala is comprised in the Talmud, and consists of two parts,—the Mishna, and the Gemara. These the rabbies greatly preferred before the scriptures ; and hence their proverbial estimate of written books : "The Mikdash" (or Old Testament) "is like water ; the Mishna like wine ; and the Gemara" (more plain and perfect) "like hippocras," or the richest wines.\*

Although we have been compelled to be brief in the selection of evidence, we incline to think that enough has been advanced to prove, that, in cases of extremity, and when influenced by strong national or religious prejudice, the Jewish elders did not scruple to alter passages in the Old Testament, so as to make them read more favourably to their own views. We have now to show that they had this motive for altering the chronology of the early ages, in order to present a complete chain of evidence on this important subject.

It is an undoubted fact, that at the period when our Saviour made his appearance in the world, there was a very general expectation of his coming, and that, not only among the Jews, but also among many of the Heathen nations. This expectation appears to have been founded, to a considerable extent, upon a tradition, that the world would continue as it had from the Creation for about six thousand years, and that a new and blessed dispensation should then be introduced. Probably this notion had its origin in a mystic application of the six days of creation, and the ensuing sabbath, to the ages of the world, in which the ancient Cabbalists indulged. Whatever was the cause of this opinion, its reality and influence are undeniable.

\* WHITAKER'S "Origin of Arianism," p. 115, *note*.



We have repeated allusions to this notion in the apostolical Epistles. The inspired writers frequently allude to their being in the last days, and as standing on the verge of a sabbatic millennium. St. Paul, for instance, in 1 Thessalonians iv. 15—17, clearly speaks in this manner. It was to objections founded on this opinion, that St. Peter replied, in his second Epistle, chap. iii. 2—13. Many of the early Christian writers, as Clement, Barnabas, Justin, Tertullian, Cyprian, and others, speak out most distinctly as to the existence of this opinion. “It is also traced in the Sibylline oracles, in Hesiod, in the work ascribed to Darius Hystaspes, in Hermes Trismegistus, and Plato quotes the same from Orpheus.” \* In the same spirit Theophilus of Antioch observes, that, upon the sixth day, God made man, and man fell by sin; so upon the sixth day of the Hexchiliad, or sixth millenary age of the world, our Lord Jesus Christ came to save man by his cross and resurrection.

There can therefore be no doubt that not only was this opinion general, prior to the advent of Christ, but that throughout the apostolic age, Jews and Christians united in the belief that the world was to end, and a new state of things to begin, after six thousand years were completed; “so they also agreed that Christ was to come in the sixth millennium, and this latter period they identified with that which in scripture is called ‘the last days,’ ‘the last times,’ and ‘the coming ages,’—phrases which were unanimously interpreted as denoting the era of the Messiah, and the great events which were to follow his appearance.” †

The Jewish elders, therefore, supported by the prevalence of this opinion, saw, that if the world could be shown to have existed but four thousand years, it would at once appear that Jesus could not be the promised Messiah, he having come long before the appointed time.

It is a remarkable coincidence, that the conclusion to which all our previous investigations have conducted us, was explicitly laid down as an historical fact, more than five

\* RUSSELL’S “Connexion,” vol. i. p. 77.

† *Ibid.* p. 78.



hundred years ago by an eminent historian. Abulfaragius, a writer of the thirteenth century, asserts, "that the Jews believing it to have been foretold in the law and the prophets, that Christ was to be sent in the last time; in order for a pretence to reject him, they altered the epoch of the world, which in scripture is computed by the ages of men, and subtracted from Adam's age when he begat Seth an hundred years, and added them to the remainder of his life. And they did the same in the lives of most of his posterity to Abraham. And thus it appeared, by their computation, that Christ was manifested in the fifth millenary, (just begun,) near to the middle of the ages of the world, which were to be seven thousand, according to their tradition and interpretation of scripture; and therefore, said they, 'We are yet in the middle of the time of the world, and the appointed time for the appearance of the Messiah is not yet come.' But the computation of the Septuagint showed that Christ came in the sixth millenary of the world, at which time he was to come."\*

Thus we see reason to conclude that the Hebrew chronology has been altered, with the design of sustaining, thereby, the cause of Judaism against Christianity.

We have now, lastly, to inquire,

(III.) Whether an examination of these systems, as to their agreement with the general order of nature, their internal evidence of truth or falsehood, and their accordance with the general evidence of tradition and history, will warrant strong confidence in the genuineness of any of these systems of numbers.

Many learned men have contended, that, in the general course of nature, there is a relation between the time of procreation and the duration of life. And applying this to the present state of the world, and the history of the period now under consideration, it has been contended that, as we now see persons become parents at from twenty to twenty-five years of age, which is about the third part of the term

\* JACKSON'S "Chronological Antiquities," vol. i. p. 99.



of life ; so, according to the Septuagint, we might expect, that persons living seven, eight, or nine hundred years, would be parents at about one hundred and eighty, two hundred, or two hundred and thirty years ; while, on the same principle, it would be most unreasonable to suppose, with the Hebrew, that a person living nine hundred years should be a father at the age of ninety, another, living nine hundred and ten years, should be a father at the age of seventy, and so on. Now, without insisting on this argument, we cannot but admit that there is some force in it ; and that the Hebrew itself does not bring down the period at which persons became parents in the antediluvian age, to that which was found to be the ordinary time in an age when the life of man was very greatly abridged. Many ancient authors, referring to the earliest ages, have distinctly alluded to the extended period of juvenile life, when the existence of mankind was so protracted. Witness Hesiod :—

“ Yet still a hundred years beheld the boy  
Beneath his mother’s roof, her infant joy.” \*

Nor can we omit to notice the irregularity exhibited in the Hebrew tables ; for, passing over the objection urged above, it must be admitted, that in the general course of nature it is not usual for a person to become a parent at a third of the age at which his father did ; and therefore, when we see sixty-five and one hundred and sixty-two, sixty-five and one hundred and eighty-seven, and twenty-nine and seventy, as the ages at which persons immediately succeeding each other had their first sons, we are warranted in saying that the appearance is suspicious.

Another objection urged against the Hebrew chronology is presented to us, in connexion with the general succession of father and son. With respect to this, the shortened scheme exhibits a startling appearance. We see, in the age immediately following the Flood, all the patriarchs, in a direct line, for *eleven generations*, living contemporaneously ; †

\* “ Works and Days.” ELTON’S Translation, line 175.

† See Table at the end of the Preliminary Dissertation, pp. 102, 103.



and in the antediluvian period, we have nine generations living together. These are exhibitions we never meet with in undoubted history; and they are completely obviated by the Septuagint. According to this version, the generations die away just in the order of their birth. This presents no greater difficulty or irregularity than we might expect in the history of this remote period, which, it must be observed, does not, by any intimation or allusion whatever, countenance these remarkable features; a silence which is decidedly favourable to the Greek numbers.

We shall now consider both systems with respect to their internal evidences of truth or falsehood.

Here let it be observed, the Septuagint presents to us no remarkable discrepancy; every thing appears to be genuine and natural. Nor can we, on the supposition that this is the vitiated copy, account for the few points of agreement which still remain between it and the Hebrew. Why, for instance, was not the corruption extended to Jared, Methuselah, and Lamech? To this question, on the supposition here mentioned, no answer has been or can be given. But if we urge the same inquiry against the Hebrew, the results are important. These cases stand out in the Hebrew table as in bold relief. And if, on the hypothesis that this is the corrupted copy, we ask, Why were they allowed to remain? the answer is obvious,—Methuselah and Lamech could not be reduced by the subtraction of a hundred years before the birth of their respective children, and by adding it to the after-period of their lives, without inevitably protracting their existence beyond the Deluge, which would have detected the imposture.

The case of Jared is another exception; and Jackson has in this instance proved, that while the school of Tiberias allowed the correct number to remain, and, consequently, the Hebrew to agree with the Greek, the Jews of Babylon, determined to carry their excision to its utmost possible limit, did here also take away the hundred years, making him to be sixty-two years of age at the birth of Enoch, and, consequently, the Flood to take place A.M. 1565.



Before we close this part of the subject, we are compelled to notice what appears to be a striking inconsistency in the Hebrew numbers, when applied to the period from the Deluge to Abraham.

Can we believe, that in about three hundred years, a single family of eight persons could have covered those immense tracts of country with a population extending, from India and Assyria, to Ethiopia, Egypt, and Greece? that nations should be formed, kings be surrounded with regular courts, money coined, wars levied, and the various classes of society so defined, as the Bible history compels us to believe was the case, in the time of Abraham,—all this in the brief period of three centuries? Again: Is it likely that Nimrod should have formed a kingdom, and assumed the state of a king in the presence of his father, grandfather, and Noah himself?

Thus we see that, with respect to all these particulars, while the Hebrew account involves us in perplexity and confusion, the Greek appears to satisfy every demand, and to be worthy of our confidence.

We now refer to several early traditions which relate to this subject.

There was a very ancient book ascribed to the patriarch Enoch. It was quoted by Eupolemus, B.C. 200, by the apostles Peter and Jude, and by many other of the earliest Christian writers. In an abstract of this book, preserved by Syncellus, we are told, that the circumstance mentioned Gen. vi. 2, took place in the days of Jared, and in A.M. 1170. Now this contradicts the Hebrew, according to which Noah was born before this year; but it confirms the Septuagint, which places the birth of Enoch about this time.\*

Another passage records, that in the hundred and sixty-fifth year of Enoch, which was in the year of the world 1286, the archangel Uriel, who presided over the stars, discovered to Enoch what the month was, and the tropical year.† This exactly agrees with the Greek chronology.

The "Testament of the twelve Patriarchs" is another

\* JACKSON'S "Chronological Antiquities," p. 61.

† *Ibid.* p. 63.



ancient work preserved by the Jews; and in the testament of Benjamin it is said, that Cain was two hundred years old when his troubles on account of the death of Abel began. Now, as this was before the birth of Seth, it strikingly confirms the Septuagint.\*

Jackson quotes a tradition from Selden, that prevailed among the eastern nations, to the effect, that Seth died in the twentieth year of Enoch, and Enos in the fifty-third of Methuselah; both of which widely differ from the Hebrew, and perfectly accord with the Greek.

We might multiply the number of these quotations; but these are amply sufficient to show, that the current of Jewish tradition before the birth of Christ was utterly at variance with the present Hebrew numbers, and confirmatory of the Greek. It must be remembered, that we say nothing respecting the authenticity of these accounts. It is enough that they obtained currency and credit among the Jews of that day; which could not have been the case, had they differed from the then scripture text, as they do now from the Hebrew. It will also be seen that they are of such particular and incidental character, as could not be forged to support a favourite system.

We pass from tradition to history; and first direct attention to the annals of China. According to the history of this remarkable nation, Fohi, their first sovereign, began his reign B. C. 2953. It is, however, but fair to say, that there is so much of fable mixed up with the account of this and the six following reigns, that they have been generally considered doubtful: we therefore put them quite out of our calculation. We then come to Yao, who is the first sovereign mentioned in the "Shoo-king," the celebrated historical work of the great Confucius, which was compiled B. C. 500. But this reign began B. C. 2357, or just nine years before the Hebrew account of the Deluge.†

In reference to this reign, Jackson does not scruple to

\* JACKSON'S "Chronological Antiquities," p. 63.

† "Edinburgh Encyclopædia," art. *China*. "History of China," Edinburgh Cabinet Library, vol. i. p. 41.



say, that "the reign of this emperor is fixed with great and undeniable certainty, both by the before-mentioned eclipse\* and the annals of the 'Shoo-king;' and by a period or cycle of sixty years, continued from his reign, without interruption, to this day. This computation can no more be doubted than the reckoning of the Greeks by their Olympiads. The Chinese history therefore is a great confirmation of the Septuagint chronology; and is the greater confirmation of it, because there is no room to suspect or imagine that it could have been accommodated to it."†

If we turn to Egypt, we discern, amid all the darkness which at first seems to cover its ancient history, sufficient to prove that it cannot be reconciled to the Hebrew computation. Difficulties, it must be confessed, yet remain connected with the date of the origin of this empire, which alike bid defiance to labour and to learning; but still the variation found in the best accounts is not sufficient to destroy our argument. To show this, we give the date of the accession of Menes, according to some of the best authorities. Menes began his reign, according to Hales, B.C. 2412; according to Old Chronicle, 2231; according to Eratosthenes, 2220; according to Eusebius, 2258; according to Julius Africanus, 2218; according to Dr. Prichard, 2414.‡ These accounts exhibit a difference of about two hundred years; yet, if we take the least as the true number, we are taught that Menes was king in Egypt one hundred and thirty-four years after the Flood. When we consider that the Dispersion took place in the days of Peleg, who, according to the Hebrew account, was born in the year after the Flood 101, can we believe that, thirty-three years after his birth, Egypt was inhabited, and governed by a king? Is this at all probable?

\* Jackson had verified the calculations respecting this eclipse.

† JACKSON'S "Chronological Antiquities," vol. ii. p. 428. "We are told by Pezron, that the Jesuit missionaries to China were actually obliged to return to Rome to ask leave to use the Septuagint calculation, in order to satisfy the scruples of the better-informed in that country."—RUSSELL'S "Connexion," vol. i. p. 22.

‡ DR. RUSSELL'S "Egypt," p. 64.



In allowing this, however, we concede too much : Josephus must unquestionably have had better opportunities of becoming acquainted with Manetho, than were enjoyed by the ancient authors we have quoted ; and he assures us that Menes reigned more than one thousand three hundred years before Solomon.\* Now we know that the son of David began his reign B.C. 1030 ; the accession of Menes was therefore B.C. 2330, which brings us within a few years of the Flood.†

The records of Assyria exhibit equally striking evidence. The fragments of Berosus, and the Catalogue of Kings, preserved by Ctesias, place the reign of Nimrod B.C. 2554, or about two hundred years before the Hebrew era of the Flood. Yet this date is confirmed by Abulfaragius, as well as by the general tenor of ancient eastern history.‡

We now direct attention to the opinions of some of the earliest Christian writers, respecting the era of our Lord's incarnation.

Origen—and we have in the preceding pages shown the importance of his testimony—states, that our Lord descended from heaven, for the salvation of man, six thousand years after the Almighty had formed the first of the human race.§

Hippolytus, also, who flourished in the beginning of the third century, warns his flock that the time of antichrist could not be far distant, as six thousand years from the creation of the world had passed away. And Ambrose, in his Exposition of the Gospel of St. Luke, has left on record a similar statement.||

Hesychius assures us that, according to the doctrine of the church of Antioch, the incarnation of the Redeemer took place nearly six thousand years from the foundation of the world.¶

Julius Africanus, who appears to have studied scripture

\* JOSEPHUS, *Antiq.* lib. viii. † RUSSELL'S "Egypt," pp. 64, 65.

‡ HALES'S "Analysis," vol. iii. p. 19.

§ RUSSELL'S "Connexion," vol. i. p. 114.

|| *Ibid.*

¶ *Ibid.* p. 113.



chronology very carefully, places the birth of Christ five thousand five hundred years from the Creation ; a conclusion generally received by the Christians of that day, and adhered to by the eastern Christians at least, till the close of the seventh century.\*

The chronology of Nicephorus, who was patriarch of Constantinople in 806, makes the time from the Creation to the birth of Christ precisely the same as Julius ; namely, 5500.†

And, lastly, Nennius, the ancient British historian, who wrote in the ninth century, states, that from Adam to the ministry of Christ, was 5228 years.‡

Yet perhaps, after all, the most striking proof of which such a subject as the present is capable, is that afforded by incidental expressions, which at first sight do not appear to be at all connected with it. We shall content ourselves by referring to one of these : “ And these are the days that Abraham lived, an hundred and threescore and fifteen years. Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years.” (Gen. xxv. 6, 7.) Who, after reading this, can bring himself to believe, that Shem, born four hundred years before Abraham, was then alive ? that the great grandfather of the great grandfather of Abraham’s great grandfather still survived him ? Who can believe, that Abraham was by many years the youngest of his race, and had lived the greatest part of his life contemporary with ten of his ancestors in a direct line ? We are persuaded, that with such a text before us, these circumstances must appear utterly inadmissible.

We have endeavoured to show, that the abbreviated Masorite chronology is opposed to the records of the principal nations of antiquity. We might, consequently, suppose that those writers who allow themselves to be guided by it, must thereby be led into difficulty. That such is the case, we have ample proof in the work of the learned Rollin.

\* RUSSELL’S “ Connexion,” pp. 115, 116.

† DR. ADAM CLARKE’S Works, vol. x. p. 184.

‡ NENNIUS’S “ History,” p. 5.



Notwithstanding all the fragments preserved by Berosus and Ctesias, who have given us a list of Assyrian monarchs, from Nimrod to Thonos Concolerus, extending over a period of one thousand seven hundred and forty-five years ; so fettered was this great man by the chronological system which he had embraced, that he is obliged in his Assyrian history to say, "The history of the successors of Ninyas for thirty generations, except Phul and Sardanapalus, is unknown." Now, barren as this period is of historical records, enough remain to mark out, at least with tolerable accuracy, the rise and progress of the principal nations ; and no writer of ordinary diligence need be compelled to exhibit a chasm of "thirty generations," unless his scheme be based on a corrupted chronology. This is the case with Rollin ; and the consequence is fatal to his arrangement, prior to the birth of Abraham.

Every historian who has fairly set himself to the important task of reconciling ancient history with the statements of holy scripture, has felt this difficulty : and hence Sir Walter Raleigh quaintly observes, "that if we look over all, and do not hastily satisfy our understanding with the first things offered, and thereby being satiated do slothfully and drowsily sit down, we shall find it more agreeable to follow the reckoning of the LXX. ;.....for in Abraham's time all the then known parts of the world were peopled ; all regions and countries had their kings. Egypt had many magnificent cities, and so had Palestine and all bordering countries ; yea, all that part of the world besides, as far as India ; and those not built with sticks, but of hewn stones, and defended with walls and rampiers ; which magnificence needed a parent of more antiquity than those other men have supposed. And therefore where the scriptures are plainest, and best agreeing with reason and nature, to what end should we labour to beget doubts and scruples, to draw all things into wonders and marvels ? giving also strength thereby to common cavillers, and to those men's apish brains, who only bend their wits to find impossibilities and monsters in the story of the world and mankind."



It may, indeed, appear strange, that any system of chronology should obtain credit, when opposed to such evidence as is arrayed against the Hebrew enumeration. In explanation, we can only just refer to the circumstances of the case. The scheme to which we are favourable was in use before Christ, was followed by the Christian fathers, and appears not to have been called in question by the Western church till the eighth century. The venerable Bede then evinced a partiality for the Hebrew computation. This opinion, however, made very little progress till the Reformation. Up to that period, the authority of the Greek version, and the unanimous consent of the Christian fathers, were still found to regulate public opinion, with respect to the age of the world.

But the Reformers were easily induced to consider the extended chronology as one of the errors handed down by Rome; and therefore, when archbishop Usher, in his great partiality for rabbinical literature, adopted the Masorite numbers, the Reformed Church eagerly caught at the change, and, from that time until recently, the "Hebrew verity," so called, was defended with as much zeal as if the entire truth of revelation had depended on that system of numbers.

For this purpose, authentic history has been assailed, ancient records have been mutilated, Oriental annals have been subjected to torture, and every effort of critical ingenuity has been resorted to.

Nevertheless, within the last century we have seen some of our first biblical scholars united with our best writers on ancient history, in recognising and defending the claims of the Greek numbers.

Bishop Stillingfleet, with his usual learning and judgment, states: "The whole controversy concerning this part of the chronology of the world comes to this: Whether it be more probable that the Jews, who lived under the second temple, (who then were the trustees to whom were committed *the oracles of God*,) whom the LXX. followed in their version, had the true reading; or the Talmudic Jews,



after their dispersion and banishment from their country, when they were discarded by God himself from being his people." \*

Jackson, in his valuable work on "Chronological Antiquities," devoted great learning and immense labour to the investigation of the subject. He has given us, as the result, a powerful defence of the Septuagint chronology.

Dr. Hales, in "The New Analysis of Chronology," has followed in the same course ; and, with the exception of the second Cainan, has come to the same conclusion.

Faber, in his invaluable "Pagan Idolatry," has also gone into the subject ; and has adopted the Samaritan, which, as we have seen, very nearly approximates to the Septuagint, in the postdiluvian period.

Sir William Drummond, also, in his *Origines*, asserts his belief in the extended scheme ; and ingeniously accounts for the abbreviation of the Hebrew.

And, lastly, Dr. Russell, who, in his recent work, "A Connexion of Sacred and Profane History," has richly contributed to our knowledge of the ancient world, has also given us a masterly defence of the Greek chronology.

In company with such writers, we shall not be accused of temerity, if we avow our full conviction, that the chronology of the present Hebrew Bible, and, consequently, the numbers found in the text and printed in the margin of those editions of the English version which are enriched with references, are manifestly incorrect ; and that the Septuagint chronology is supported by evidence which commend it to our approbation.

Having thus brought our inquiry to a close, we add a few remarks arising out of the subject.

1. It may be objected, that we have not paid sufficient attention to the claims of the Samaritan scheme. We reply, that the brevity we imposed on ourselves at the commencement, has prevented our doing this so fully as we desired. It must, however, have occurred to those who have attended to the subject, that, according to this, the postdiluvian patriarchs,

\* *Origines Sacræ*, vol. ii. p. 165.



though dying at half the age of the antediluvians, lived to twice the age of the latter, before they were parents: further, in the antediluvian period we are without any historical evidence to guide us, and in the postdiluvian period the arguments we have adduced in favour of the Septuagint are equally in favour of the Samaritan. In fact, if we have succeeded in showing that the Greek is worthy of our confidence, we have, by doing so, proved that the Samaritan is in its antediluvian part incorrect, and in the period subsequent to the Flood nearly true.

2. It must not be supposed, that, because we have come to this conclusion, we are prepared to maintain that the Septuagint numbers are perfectly free from error: on the contrary, it is possible, that, upon a minute examination of every part, some small correction might be found necessary. Hales and Russell have both thought so; and when we enter particularly upon the history of this period, we may feel ourselves similarly circumstanced. Our conclusion is this: that the Hebrew, as a whole, appears to be utterly inadmissible, and the Septuagint system to be founded in truth.

3. Lastly: still less must it be supposed, that the inquiries we have made, and the difficulties we have encountered, have, in any measure, lessened our religious respect for the holy scriptures.

This sacred volume, in our estimation, stands upon the immovable foundation of eternal truth; and comes to us supported by evidence which no reasonable mind can either gainsay or resist. We are, nevertheless, of opinion, that the good providence of God, in the preservation of the several versions, has not been sufficiently recognised. In our judgment, it is a blessing of the greatest magnitude, that, just at the period when his chosen people rejected the Messiah, and set themselves to oppose his gracious designs, the Divine Being had, by three separate and independent copies of his truth, saved it from extensive injury and corruption. The Septuagint, in particular, is calculated and designed to impart, not only to chronology, but also to other branches of biblical knowledge, greater assistance than has yet been



drawn from it. These remarks are not produced by any extravagant partiality entertained for the Septuagint. We simply desire, that where it supplies a manifest omission or correction of the Hebrew, in a clear and satisfactory manner, the emendation should be received and considered as a part of genuine holy scripture.

As proof of the reasonableness of this, and as supporting some of the conclusions to which we have come, we append a few observations from the pen of a late eminent commentator.

“ 1. The Septuagint translation was the first instrument of diffusing the knowledge of the true God in the Gentile world. The scriptures which were before locked up from almost all the inhabitants of the earth, except the Jews, were introduced by this version to the most powerful and polished nations in the world ; and there is sufficient evidence, that the most eminent of the Heathen philosophers had not only seen these sacred books, but availed themselves of their contents.

“ 2. The Hebrew text of the Old Testament could not have been properly understood but through the medium of this translation, as no other writings in the pure Hebrew exist.

“ 3. There are many words and forms of speech in the New Testament, the true import of which cannot be known, but by their use in the Septuagint.

“ 4. This version preserves *many important words, some sentences, and several whole verses, which originally made a part of the Hebrew text, but have long since entirely disappeared.*

“ 5. This is the version, and this only, which is constantly used and quoted in the Gospels, and by the apostles ; and which has thereby received the highest sanction which any writing can possibly receive.” \*

We have thus, as fully as our limits will allow, investigated the chronology of this period. The reader will form his own opinion of the evidence. We have freely given our

\* DR. ADAM CLARKE'S Works, vol. x. p. 148.



judgment, in which we think those who carefully study the subject will coincide. We pass, therefore, from this part of our inquiry with this single remark, that, as the entire history and tradition to which we have referred bear a united and uncompromising testimony against the Hebrew numbers, so it is evident, that, if but one of these historical facts is correctly dated, then it will be *impossible* that the Hebrew can be correct, and the general truth of the Septuagint chronology will be rendered extremely probable even from this instance alone.

## PART II.

### AN INQUIRY INTO THE INTELLECTUAL CHARACTER, AND THE LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC ATTAINMENTS, OF MANKIND IN THE EARLY AGES OF THE WORLD.

THIS is a subject as difficult as it is interesting; as obscure and recondite in its character, as it is important in its results.

We have already expressed our opinion of the important bearing of this inquiry on the history of the patriarchal age: we need not repeat these sentiments.

It is, however, deeply to be regretted, that, while introducing a subject of this kind, we must write as if addressing a nation of infidels, or at least a community of persons with whom the inspired truth of God has no authority. Nay, we are placed in worse circumstances even than this: If men would avow their disbelief, our task would be an easy one; little labour or learning would be necessary to cover such avowal with shame. But it is not so. Men of learning parade systems before the world as the results of philosophical investigation, which include dogmas that are utterly incompatible with the obvious sense of scripture; and, unless they are followed through all the tortuous windings of their crooked and benighted course, they affect an air of triumph, and expect to be regarded as the wise men of the world.

These observations apply with peculiar propriety to the



case in hand. We have to investigate the intellectual character, the learning, and science of the early races of mankind. Looking at the Bible, nothing can be more explicit than the information which it affords. We find man created in the image of God ; and, although he afterwards fell into sin, his character, as exhibited in holy writ, is nevertheless replete with intelligence, and distinguished by the constant exercise of superior intellectual talent and energy. Yet while, according to the plain statements of scripture, this is incontestably the case, philosophers officiously obtrude upon our attention statements which sink the origin of mankind to the lowest level of animal life. "Many years have not elapsed since a professor of high philological character published a work in two large volumes, the scope and design of which was to prove, that language had a very rude and imperfect origin ; that it commenced in the reduplication of such sounds as, 'agg, agg,' 'wagg, wagg ;' and that by degrees, as mankind emerged out of a state of barbarism, and their wants and employments multiplied, more euphonic and complicated sounds were added ; or, as he was pleased to call it, were 'aggged' to the pristine and primitive elements. The work was loudly applauded, and language was exhausted in finding terms to express the universal admiration which the learned philologer's 'waggery' excited. Seriously, the book was widely and extravagantly applauded.

"Now, it certainly can excite no surprise, that an ingenious and amusing theory, however absurd, should have found a class of followers and admirers ; but, in a Christian country, where the Bible was in every person's hands, and generally acknowledged to be, at least, *respectable authority*, that no one should have been found bold enough to point out the utter inconsistency between such a theory, and the facts recorded there, proves, most undeniably, how much less importance is attached to the plainest statements of scripture than to the wildest vagaries of that which is called 'genius' amongst mankind. The truth seems to be, (and it is a lamentable one,) that the sneers of



those who have gained a name for talent, by affecting to despise the words of inspiration, and the cautions of those who will not admit that the Bible addresses itself to the understanding, make men shrink from the *weakness* of admitting its authority, or afraid to look into it for information, save through the spectacles of those who, in searching for mysteries, overlook the plainest facts.

“ Having based our inquiry on the irrefragable truth and certainty of every statement in the sacred records, and on their infinite superiority in point of authority, and in respect of satisfactory explanation, over every theory that ever was, or ever will be, broached, we should not have thought it necessary to refer at all to the preceding theory concerning language, had it not furnished an instance, which almost every reader will at once appreciate, of the folly into which wisdom degenerates, when it attempts to penetrate the past or the future without the aid of revelation, and did it not serve as a useful warning against the fashionable philosophy of the day, in which man himself, with all his faculties, is viewed as a thing of spontaneous growth, a walking vegetable, an improved zoophyte, or, at best, a civilized ouran-outang.

“ Let us give these theorists the benefit of their suppositions for a moment. Suppose the vegetables or animals become men ; and that all the operations of mother earth have reached the point where men remain men, and beasts continue beasts, without any chance of further metamorphosis : the vegetable is checked in its attempts to become a zoophyte ; the zoophyte is ordered to remain on its native spot ; the ass is warned that it will in vain strive to become a lion ; and the ape, though within a step of humanity, is denied the faculty of speech. Men begin to walk abroad, proud of their pre-eminence over the other less fortunate natural productions. They discover that they can make a noise as well as the other animals : and of course the noises the brutes make, being the first sounds the men hear, they naturally begin to imitate them. Having sprung out of the earth at various places, they meet each other acci-



dentally. The one wishes to tell the other that he saw a lion,—he roars like one : there is no other way so easy or so intelligible, of describing the creature which frightened him. Another has seen an ass, and accordingly brays ; or a hog, and grunts. A third whistles like a bird, or chirps like a cricket ; chatters like a monkey, or screams like a cockatoo. Thus language would become a compound of screaming, whistling, roaring, and grunting. The learned may write as long and laboriously as they choose on the origin of speech ; this is the *natural* origin of language amongst self-taught savages, destitute of revelation.

“ How beautifully does the scripture account of the origin of mankind contrast with the philosophy which admits of such objections as may thus be suggested ! How satisfactorily does it account for the general resemblances, as well as for the endless variety, in language ! Proceeding from one family, the parents of which were placed on the earth, perfectly fitted in body and in mind for the situation they held in creation ; mankind, wherever they emigrated, or spread abroad, carried knowledge and language with them. The changes on these were produced by time, by distance, and by differences of habit and situation ; but were never sufficiently great to obliterate all traces of their common origin, and of a primeval intercommunity of ideas as well as of speech.

“ Still, it may be argued, by those who contend for the savage-like simplicity of primeval language, that as speech was only required for expressing the *wants* of mankind, when these wants, and consequently the arts, were few, the vocabulary would be small, and the verbs scanty ; and that this would be the case, even if the earth had originally been peopled in the manner recorded in the Bible. But what a miserable and sterile philosophy is this ! as if man had been placed on the earth for no other purpose but to feed, at first, like the beasts that perish ! Besides, if language had only been used to express wants, our first parents would have required no language in Eden ; for there they had no wants ! Such reasoners forget, too, that unless theology, in



the proper sense of the word, be a thing of man's invention, which has grown up with the other wants and weaknesses of human nature, the knowledge of God and his worship must have been a matter of as much importance to the first man as the last." \*

This case is ably summed up by an author who has been before referred to. He says :—"The statements of scripture leave to infidels, who have originated it, their utterly untenable theory, of Egypt or Ethiopia covered, some myriads of years ago, with a horde of speechless savages, gradually improving themselves, through the long lapse of lazy-footed centuries, until they had attained a pitch of civilization and refinement, which enabled them to meet together, and agree upon the sublime harmony of sounds and pictures, which constitutes the language of Egypt. For, in spite of the constant repetition of such absurdities, we know that all analogy, as well as all scripture, is against them. The savage never improves until he comes in contact with civilized man. Left to himself, his race is always sinking to deeper degradation and final extinction. This is probably a rule without exception. The traditions of all savages are, on this point, in accordance with the Bible. They all tell of past days of greatness and prosperity, evidently meaning civilization. The savage state, then, is not one of nature, but of degradation ; and it is in modern rather than in ancient times, that this deplorable consequence of the sin that is in man is to be looked for. The whole history of man since the creation has likewise taught us, that, ignorant of the art of writing, he would soon become a savage ; for we are not aware that a race of human beings entitled to be called civilized ever existed who were without it : and this consideration certainly renders it probable, that in this art also man, in his primitive state, was taught of God." †

Although we think the few preceding paragraphs, if carefully studied, will be found to contain a triumphant

\* MORISON'S "Religious History of Man," pp. 62—66.

† "Antiquities of Egypt," p. 167.



refutation of the absurd notions which have been promulgated respecting the low and degraded origin of human nature ; we cannot but feel a measure of discouragement from the fact, that it has been necessary to repel dogmas so entirely opposed to the true character of man, so fully at variance with the teaching of the word of God. If the rationality of the first human beings be denied ; if they be supposed to have waded through years of darkness before they attained the gift of speech ;—if such doctrines have obtained in a Christian country, then the attempt to prove that letters, literature, and science, in the earliest ages of man's history, shed their benign influence on his career, would appear to be a task as daring as it would be hopeless. Still, as the simple application of scripture truth has dispelled one delusion, we trust that a calm inquiry into the subject on Bible principles will dissipate the other.

In our attempt to carry out this part of our purpose, we shall endeavour to show that alphabetic characters were known and used by mankind in the earliest ages of their history.

We now find the world in possession of these characters ; and perceive, that, by their use, all the requisites for intellectual intercourse between man and man are amply furnished. We see that the same means would have rendered the same advantages to mankind in every past age as they do to us ; and the very natural inquiry arises, Were they coeval with our race, or were they subsequently invented ? and, if the latter, when and by whom was the discovery effected ?

In attempting to obtain satisfactory answers to these questions, the first and more obvious course will be, to examine with care the records of history, that we may ascertain whether they give us any information respecting so great a discovery. In pursuing this course, we refer to the records of Greece, one of the oldest nations with whose literature we have any extensive and particular acquaintance. We are there informed that alphabetical characters were brought into that country by Cadmus, who is supposed to have lived B. C. 1493, and that he came either from Phe-



nicia or Egypt. Extending our researches to the annals of the latter nation, we have to encounter greater difficulty, as they possessed hieroglyphics, and a sacred kind of writing, as well as the use of an alphabet: the inquiry therefore becomes greatly involved. Yet the best authorities concur in ascribing the introduction of letters into Egypt to Thoth or Theut, the Hermes of Greek, and the Mercury of Latin, mythology. It consequently becomes an important part of the inquiry to ascertain at what time this individual lived. As in Egyptian annals we meet with several of that name, this seems to be a difficult task. It appears, from a general view of the subject, that, in the earliest age of Egyptian history, or, rather, prior to the commencement of authentic history, a person of this name flourished, who from his great knowledge was supposed to be more than mortal. From this circumstance, when an individual, in after-ages, appeared to surpass his contemporaries in wisdom, he was said to be inspired by the spirit of Thoth, or to be another incarnation of that deity.

We are, however, distinctly informed by Diodorus Siculus,\* that the Thoth to whom the Egyptians attributed the invention of letters was sacred scribe to Osiris, king of Egypt, who is said to have been the son of Jupiter. His words are: "They say, Osiris was much given to husbandry; that he was the son of Jupiter. He found out the use of the vine; and then, planting it, was the first that drank wine. Above all others, he most honoured Hermes; one of an admirable ingenuity, and quick invention in finding out what might be useful to mankind. This Hermes was the first, as they report, that taught how to speak distinctly and articulately, and gave names to many

\* Diodorus the Sicilian lived in the reigns of Julius Cæsar and Augustus. Having in early life travelled into Asia, Africa, and Europe, he, on his return, established himself at Rome, and devoted thirty years to the compilation of his Historical Library, in forty books, containing a history of the world from the earliest times to B.C. 40, a small part of which now remains. He possessed opportunities of collecting information as extensive as the world then afforded. His judgment is praised; and he is esteemed as a man of sense and probity.



things that had none before. He found out letters, and instituted the worship of the gods ; and was the first that observed the motion of the stars, and invented music, and taught the manner of wrestling, and invented arithmetic, and the art of curious graving and cutting of statues. He first found out the harp with three strings. To conclude, he was Osiris's sacred scribe."\*

There can be no doubt that this extract gives the opinions which prevailed in Egypt in the time of Diodorus. Yet, instead of affording satisfactory information respecting the invention of letters, it appears rather to exhibit an individual who had collected and taught the various sciences and useful arts, as far as they were then known. It is further evident, from the references to Jupiter, husbandry, and wine, that the time to which the tradition refers was very soon after the Deluge, the language being too analogous to the scripture account to be mistaken.

It was, however, an opinion which prevailed from the earliest antiquity, and is recorded by Cicero, that Egypt had received "both laws and letters from the Phenicians." It will, therefore, be necessary to refer to the ancient history of this people ; and it is a very fortunate circumstance, that, although we have only one vestige of Phenician literature which has survived the wreck of ages, yet it contains important information on this subject.

Sanchoniatho,† whose writings are the oldest of any that have been preserved to our time, with the exception of the holy scriptures, has given an account of the generations from Adam to Noah. He calls the latter patriarch "Agrouerus the husbandman." He then says, his descendants, Amynus (Ham) and Magus, taught men to construct villages and tend flocks. By these were begotten Misor

\* Book i. chap. i.

† This writer is supposed to have flourished a few years before the Trojan war. The credit of his history is supported by Porphyry, Pliny, Curtius, Lucan, and other ancient authors. He wrote, in the language of his country, a History, in nine books, in which he treated of the theology and antiquities of Phenicia. This production is lost, with the exception of a few fragments. His works were translated into Greek by Philo-Biblius.



(Misraim). He also adds: "From Misor descended Taautus, who first invented the writing of the first letters: him the Egyptians called Thoar; the Alexandrians, Thyoth; and the Greeks, Hermes." \*

There can be no reasonable doubt that we have here the person of whom Diodorus speaks; and the knowledge of letters is by these means traced up to within two generations of the Deluge.

We will now advert to the early annals of other countries, in order to ascertain whether they support this high antiquity of the use of letters. Passing over for the present the Syrians, Indians, and some other ancient nations, particular attention is called to the earliest records of Chaldea. The scripture account informs us, that from this country the various branches of Noah's family were scattered over the different parts of the earth at the time of the general dispersion. If, therefore, letters were known soon after the Flood, we may fairly presume that in Chaldea would be found records of their use, or traditional references to an early literature.

These expectations are fully realized, and our information is extended even beyond the Deluge. Josephus informs us, that Abraham carried a knowledge of arithmetic and astronomy into Egypt, of which the people of that country were before ignorant.†

We have also very important information, bearing on this subject, in the fragments which have been preserved of the writings of Berosus,‡ the most ancient Chaldean author of whom we have any remains.

In his account of the period before the Flood, he says, that then "letters, and sciences, and arts of every kind were

\* CORY'S "Fragments," pp. 8, 9; ASTLE on Writing, p. 33.

† JOSEPHUS, *Antiq.* lib. i. cap. 8.

‡ BEROSUS was a Babylonian historian, a priest of Belus. He had therefore the advantage of access to the records of the temple, and appears to have composed his work with a strict regard to truth. He lived during the reign of Alexander the Great; and, having learned Greek from the Macedonians, removed to Greece, and taught astronomy and astrology. He was highly esteemed by the Athenians.



taught.”\* Pliny† confirms this statement, by declaring, “As for letters, I am of opinion they were in Assyria from the beginning.”

To this may be added the testimony of Jewish tradition. The Hebrew commentators on Genesis say: “Our rabbins assert, that Adam, our father of blessed memory, composed a book of precepts, which were delivered to him by God in Paradise;”‡ and Josephus states, that “the births and deaths of illustrious men” (referring to the patriarchs from Adam to Noah) “were noted down at the time with great accuracy.”§

It is hence apparent that, so far as the inquiry has been carried, ancient records afford no satisfactory information as to the *invention* of letters; while we have clearly ascertained, that the oldest nations, and especially those most celebrated for early civilisation and learning,—the Greeks, Egyptians, Phenicians, Chaldeans, and Jews,—unite in ascribing the use of letters to the very earliest period of their respective histories.

These conclusions are further confirmed by the fact, that the most learned men of different countries have ascribed this invaluable invention to the gods, or to some divine man.

Plato makes the god Theuth, or Mercury, the inventor. Diodorus Siculus tells us that Mercury invented the first characters for writing. Cicero concurs in the same opinion. The Cretans assert, that letters were given them by the Muses; while the Gentoos affirm, that letters were communicated to their ancestors by the Supreme Being, whom they call Bramah.

Nothing more clearly proves the great antiquity of alpha-

\* CORY’S “Fragments,” p. 23.

† Pliny the elder lived during the reigns of Vespasian and Titus. He distinguished himself in several public employments; but his great object appears to have been the study of nature and of literature. His only remaining work is a Natural History, in thirty-seven books. He lost his life in the eruption of Vesuvius, which destroyed Pompeii and Herculaneum, A. D. 79, when in his fifty-sixth year.

‡ “Remains of Japheth,” p. 85.

§ JOSEPHUS, *Antiq.* lib. i. cap. iii. sec. 3.



betical characters than this circumstance ; for, as bishop Warburton, with his usual wit and learning, observes, “The ancients gave nothing to the gods of whose original they had any records ; but when the memory of the invention was lost, (as of seed-corn, wine, *writing*, civil society, &c.,) the gods seized the property, by that kind of right which gives strays to the lord of the manor.” \*

Having thus assigned some reasons for believing that letters were known in the earliest ages of the world, it may be proper to consider an objection which has been urged against this opinion, before further evidence is offered in its support.

It has been objected, that hieroglyphics certainly preceded letters, as the medium of communicating ideas ; and that it was by improving and extending the use of these, that an alphabet was ultimately obtained. This view has been taken by bishop Warburton, and other learned men who have written on the subject. Yet, notwithstanding much labour and learning have been employed in their support, these conclusions do not appear to be established. It may, indeed, at first sight seem more reasonable to suppose, that mankind should have thus progressively obtained an alphabet, than that, first knowing letters, the cumbrous and inconvenient mode of hieroglyphic writing should have been resorted to. Yet, it is contended, and in fact proved, that almost all the barbarous nations of the earth, before the introduction of letters amongst them, made use of hieroglyphics ; for “not only the Chinese of the east, the Mexicans of the west, and the Egyptians of the south, but the Scythians of the north, as well as those intermediate inhabitants of the earth, the Indians, Phenicians, Ethiopians, Etruscans, &c., all used the same way of writing by picture and hieroglyphics.” †

Now, if this be the case, if hieroglyphics were so general, and the ingenuity of man carried on a gradual improvement

\* ASTLE on Writing, p. 15 ; and JACKSON’S “Antiquities,” vol. iii. p. 134.

† WARBURTON’S “Divine Legation,” book iv. sect. v. p. 33.



until letters were discovered, is it not remarkable that the various alphabets of the world can certainly be traced to one or two? Does not such a circumstance invalidate the whole theory? If this scheme had any foundation in fact, should we not have just as many alphabets as there have been separate and distinct nations? and would not all doubt have been removed from the subject long ago, by some people making this progressive discovery of letters, within the range of existing history? Yet no people, of whom we have any knowledge, has effected this: history, in all her voluminous records of the past, gives us no information of such progress; and, surely, we are warranted in believing that what has not been accomplished during so many ages, never was accomplished.

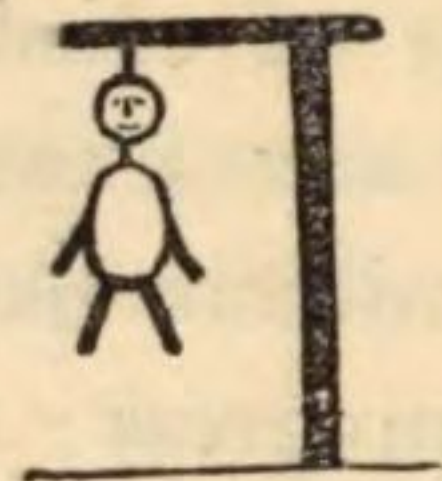
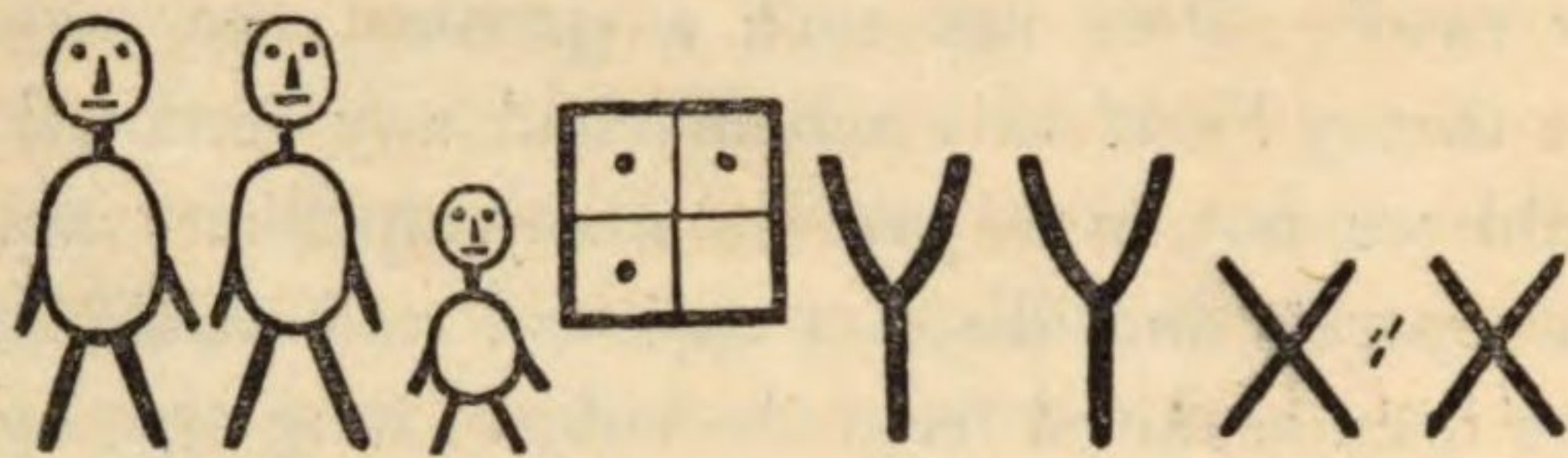
Admitting that letters were known to the first race of mankind, there is no real difficulty in accounting for the existence of hieroglyphics. Writing is an art which requires some attention, study, and practice; and there have always been, in the most cultivated nations, a great proportion of the people ignorant of it. In early times, when materials for its use were, in all probability, less convenient and more difficult to obtain, a much smaller proportion of mankind would be able to write. If, then, in the separation of families, a few persons thus ignorant were to occupy a new settlement, they would be driven to adopt some mode of recording and communicating numbers, facts, and ideas; and thus hieroglyphics might be extensively introduced, even although writing was known and practised by other more enlightened communities.\*

This is not mere speculation: it is what is actually taking place amongst ourselves, notwithstanding the immense educational influences at present in operation. Many persons, ignorant of writing, adopt artificial modes of recording facts or numbers very analogous in their character to the practice of the ancients. We are told, that, some time since,

\* This opinion is supported by DR. HARTWELL HORNE, "Bibliography," p. 73.



a bricklayer presented a bill to his employer in this expressive mode:—



which was explained to mean, “Two men and one boy, three quarters of a day, with two hods of mortar; ten shillings and tenpence. Settled.” What is this but hieroglyphic writing? In Cornwall, and other parts of England, not many years ago, some of the small dealers, who were uneducated, kept very considerable accounts in a sort of artificial character formed on a principle somewhat similar to that of the example just given.\*

The hieroglyphics of Egypt afforded Warburton and others the principal argument which they employed in support of their opinion. Yet there are circumstances, arising out of the present advanced state of knowledge respecting

\* A circumstance of rather a humorous character was communicated to the writer a few years since, respecting one of these hieroglyphical accountants. A general dealer, doing considerable business in a country district, was called on by a customer who wished to pay his bill. The characters and symbols constituting the account were called over; and amongst them the shopkeeper read, “A cheese, 7s. 6d.” The customer declared that this must be a mistake, as he had never bought a cheese in his life. The dealer contended that his bill was certainly correct; for there was the account of the cheese, marked “7s. 6d.” After much talk and some uneasiness, leaving this in doubt, they passed through the other items, when the customer, who was a carpenter, said, “You have, I think, made one omission; for I recollect I had a grindstone of you, which you have not mentioned.” “Ay,” replied the seller, “a grindstone! so it is, a grindstone: look for yourself: what I took to be a cheese is really a grindstone. My sight not being very good, I did not perceive the little hole in the middle; but you see it is a grindstone: it is all right.”



this difficult subject, which go far to prove that an alphabet must have been known prior to the occupation of Egypt by the family of Ham, and which also explain some very singular anomalies otherwise inexplicable. This will be shown by the following extract, which is taken from a recent work:—

“The descendants of Shem were permitted, after the confusion of tongues, to retain not only the principle upon which an alphabet was constructed, but its proper use as an alphabet. The Shemitic races have always written alphabetically. They were also permitted to take up their abode in countries not far removed from the scene of this terrible visitation. (Gen. x. 21—24.) These facts would seem to mark the commencement of the prophetic blessing which Noah, the second father of the human family, pronounced upon his son Shem; the continuance of which is also the subject of the Old Testament, and which was accomplished when our Lord Jesus Christ became incarnate in the form of a descendant of Shem. The Shemitic alphabets were the root whence all other alphabets were derived.

“The unhappy sons of Misraim, the son of Ham, appear to have wandered forth from their habitations, disabled from any longer articulating the sounds of that which from the first had been the language of the whole human race; and also had erased from their memories all recollections of the meaning of that language.

“Diodorus Siculus\* and Plutarch† were informed, by the Egyptian priests, that when the twice-great Thoth first came among mankind, they were not able to speak, but only uttered cries like brute animals: and, however lightly we may be inclined to value such traditions, it is perhaps not assuming too much to say, that generally they are not without some foundation in fact. Now, let the very peculiar structure of the language of ancient Egypt be taken into consideration. It appears that the language and the writing have found and modified each other; the writing

\* “*Hist. lib. i. cap. 16, 17.*”

† “*De Iside et Osiride.*”



as often assisting the language as the language the writing. It is a writing of pictures, expressing the ideas of a language of pictures. The roots of this language prove to be, according to tradition, literally the cries of animals ; every thing, as far as possible, being named from the sound produced by it. The verbs and adjectives were, many of them, (probably all, for the subject is still under investigation,) the names of objects, animate or inanimate, suggesting the peculiarities of their appearance and habits : as a cameleopard, to be long, to extend ; a wolf, to be cunning ; a scarlet ibis, to be red. To this extent all was picture, in the language as well as in the writing. It also consists of comparatively a small number of sounds, the same sound expressing many different ideas ; probably because different qualities of the same animal were thus variously employed. So that it seems scarcely possible to arrive at any other conclusion than that the language and writing arose together.

“ But we have observed the same intimate union between the writing and the idolatrous system of this singular people, and shown the probability (we might perhaps say, certainty) that it also was invented together with the writing, and therefore with the language. Yet are all the three, as we have seen, systems of great intricacy and refinement. These are also facts resulting from the recent researches into the antiquities of Egypt. And how, we ask again, are these strange anomalies to be reconciled ? A generation of men highly cultivated, possessed of great mental powers, yet without religion, writing, or even language ! It is contrary to all experience, that a civilized nation should exist without religion ; it is equally opposed to all analogy, to assume that men may be civilized without writing ; but without language civilization is plainly impossible. There are traces, nevertheless, of much thought and reflection in the construction of the language, writing, and religion of ancient Egypt ; and the three appear to have arisen together. Its inventors, therefore, must have acquired the mental culture which enabled them to construct these systems by the help of some other language, at any rate.



How came they, then, to lose this language? We leave to those who deny or lightly esteem the revelation of God the suggestion of any theory they can devise, whereby to answer the question. Those who reason rightly upon it, who follow the process of close induction by which the mode of reading hieroglyphics was discovered, will scarcely fail to perceive the conclusive and satisfactory nature of the answer which is afforded by that revelation. The language of the first settlers in Egypt had been miraculously confounded; and in that melancholy condition, they had to frame for themselves a new language and system of writing.”\*

Having disposed of this objection, it may now be necessary to cite some of the most important traditions which have come down to us respecting this subject, accompanied by the opinions of learned ancient and modern authors who have investigated the origin of letters.

Suidas † asserts that “Adam was the author of arts and letters.” ‡

The Hindoos have a tradition, that a knowledge of letters was communicated at first by divine revelation. Sir William Jones observes:—“The characters in which the languages of India were originally written are called *Nájarí*, from *Najara*, a city with the word *Deva* sometimes prefixed; because they are believed to have been taught by the Divinity himself, who prescribed the artificial order of them in a voice from heaven.” §

Jackson informs us, that the Egyptians had a tradition, that their antediluvian god Anubis wrote annals before the Flood.||

The Mahomedans have a tradition, that Adam composed poetry, some specimens of which they pretend to have pre-

\* “Antiquities of Egypt,” p. 174.

† Suidas was a Greek lexicographer. His Dictionary, which appears to have been formed on no regular plan, contains information respecting persons and places, and criticisms on particular words. We have no certain knowledge of the time when he wrote; but it is supposed to have been about the close of the eleventh century.

‡ “Remains of Japheth.”

§ “Asiatic Researches,” vol. i. p. 423.

|| JACKSON, “Chronological Antiquities,” vol. iii. p. 87.



served ; and that twenty-nine books of revelation were made to Seth, and thirty books to Enoch.\*

The Chinese have traditions, that the earliest race of the nation, at a time beyond all authentic history, were acquainted with political institutions, taught all the arts of life, and even wrote books.†

“It is asserted, that the Goths always had the use of letters ; and Le Grand affirms, that before, or soon after, the Flood, there were found, engraved in letters on large stones, the memorable acts of great men.”‡

The opinion of Pliny has been already referred to. The entire passage in which he speaks on this subject is as follows :—“As for letters, I am of opinion, that they were in Assyria from the beginning, time out of mind ; but some think, (and, namely, Gellius,) that they were devised by Mercury, in Egypt ; but others say, they came first from Syria. Anticlides writeth, that one in Egypt, named Mne-mon, was the inventor of letters fifteen years before the time of Phoroneus, the most ancient king of Greece ; and he goeth about to prove the same by ancient records and monuments out of histories. On the contrary, Epigenes, an author as renowned and of as good credit as any other, sheweth that among the Babylonians there were found Ephemerides, containing the observation of the stars for seven hundred and twenty years, written on bricks and tiles : whereby it appeareth evidently, that letters were always in use time out of mind.”§

This extract shows that Pliny had investigated the subject, having perhaps access to works long since sunk into oblivion ; and, with all these advantages, he comes to the conclusion, that “letters were *always* in use.” Nor need we be surprised at this, when one who entirely opposes the view here taken admits that “the Chaldeans had written records to show, that letters had been known and used

\* EL-MASUDI'S “Historical Encyclopedia,” pp. 64, 72.

† “Edinburgh Cabinet Library,” vol. i. p. 41, *China*.

‡ FOSBROKE'S “Encyclopedia of Antiquities,” vol. i. p. 355.

§ PLINY, “Natural History,” lib. vii. p. 56.



amongst them, at least two thousand two hundred and thirty-four years before the Christian era ;” and adds, “They undoubtedly had them long before.” \*

There is also good reason to believe, that Strabo† had the same opinion on this subject as Pliny ; for he attributes to the earliest inhabitants of Spain the possession of written records, the date of which was antecedent to the Deluge.‡

Referring now to authors of more modern date, their sentiments shall be given in their own words.

Dr. Parsons, in his “Remains of Japheth,” § having discussed at some length the invention of letters, and the origin of alphabets, observes :—

“It is not unreasonable to suppose, that when Adam was created, he was made a perfect man, not only in his form, but also in the accomplishments of his mind ; for, to imagine that he should come from the Divine hand in a state of stupidity and ignorance, would be doubting the goodness of the Creator, and the truth of holy writ. He had the dominion over every thing upon the earth, and it was referred to himself to give them names ; and if we call to mind, that God said, ‘Let us make man in our own image,’ we cannot but allow, that he was wise, and endowed with all the knowledge that his finite state was capable of receiving ; because making him in his own image could not regard his corporeal, but his mental, state alone.

“Perhaps such rational reflections as these led many learned authors, of different nations, to assert, that our first parent was instructed in all arts and sciences, letters and

\* JACKSON, “Chronological Antiquities,” vol. iii. p. 90.

† Strabo was the author of a celebrated work on geography. He had travelled much, and otherwise qualified himself ; and his work is celebrated for its elegance, purity, and for the universal knowledge displayed by its author. It contains an account of the most famous places in the world ; the origin, manners, religion, prejudices, and government of nations ; the foundation of cities ; and the history of each separate province. He is supposed to have lived about the time of the Christian era.

‡ JACKSON, “Chronological Antiquities,” vol. iii. p. 86.

§ Page 357.



prophecies ; to which Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Chaldean, Arabic, Samaritan, and Egyptian authors consent.....To enumerate every author of this opinion would be endless, tending to prove that arts, letters, and sciences were handed down to posterity from Adam through his sons."

Dr. William Hales, writing on this subject, observes :—  
 "The original structure of hieroglyphical symbols and of alphabetical letters, seems to be totally and radically different, and incapable of transmutation into each other. Hieroglyphics are imperfect outlines of the figures or objects themselves intended to be represented, which, in process of time, were transferred from sensible objects to intellectual, by a metaphorical language ; whereas letters are arbitrary marks of a few simple elementary sounds, of the easiest and readiest pronunciation, to which they bear no manner of resemblance ; and the progress of writing, like that of oral language, is from monosyllables to dissyllables, from thence to trisyllables, and so on to polysyllables : thus by their various combinations forming all that endless variety of oral or of written words which serve to communicate ideas or notions. If the origin of language, or articulate speech, was Divine, how much more the invention of writing, of alphabetical letters, and written words !—

‘Those wondrous symbols that can still retain  
 The phantom forms that pass along the brain,  
 O’er unsubstantial thought hold strong control,  
 And fix the essence of the’ immortal soul !’ \*—

which, by the magic spells of a few cabalistical characters, grouped together in clusters, can fix and embody, as it were, fleeting sounds and perishable ideas with which they have no natural union or connexion whatsoever, and embalm or preserve them to ages yet unborn !”

Having alluded to the work of an eminent writer, in which opinions opposed to those just stated are advocated, this author proceeds :—“The drift of this hypothesis, so freely and openly avowed by its patron,—to exclude the

\* “M’CREERY’S ‘Press.’”



necessity of Divine instruction,—would lead us to distrust his reasons, were they even more specious. But they are evidently insufficient; for, 1. It will appear from the whole tenor of ancient history, both sacred and profane, that the art of alphabetical writing not only could, but actually did, precede the establishment of hieroglyphic; and, 2. That the invention of alphabetic language was not superinduced by a mixture of other nations, nor could it be so superinduced.

“The book of the genealogy of the antediluvian patriarchs from Adam to Noah, is evidently represented as a written record. (Gen. v. 1.) And, indeed, how could it possibly record their names, and their generations, residues of life, and total ages, without written words? How could oral tradition hand down, through two-and-twenty centuries to the Deluge, unimpaired, thirty large and unconnected numbers, rising from a hundred to near a thousand years?

“The first numeral characters in use were the letters of the primitive alphabet; their introduction, therefore, as letters, must have been prior to their designation as numbers.

“The learned Brotier profoundly observes:—‘Writing diverged from Assyria to all those nations who either through rusticity did not neglect, or through vanity did not despise, this excellent invention. Two nations, the Egyptians and Chinese, between whom Assyria lay, and who were both exceedingly alike in vices and virtues, laboured under this sort of pride. But their pride turned to the punishment of both: the stupendous monuments of the Egyptians are become unknown and obsolete; the Chinese, always children, grow old in deciphering their characters.’—BROTIER’S ‘Tacitus,’ vol. ii. page 341.”\*

Mr. Mitford, the learned author of the “History of Greece,” says:—“The investigation of the origin of letters was in vain attempted by the most learned among the ancients, who possessed means not remaining to us. The learned among the Egyptians themselves knew nothing of that gradual rise of the art which, in modern times, has

\* HALE’S “Analysis,” vol. i. pp. 369—373.



been sought among the scanty relics of their ancient monuments. They attributed the entire invention to one person, whose name has been variously written, Thoth, Thyoth, Theuth, Athothes, Tautus, and who passed with them for a god. Among the Assyrians, less given to fable, and who, with many other arts, possessed that of alphabetical writing at a period far beyond connected history, no tradition appears to have remained by whom it was invented, or whence it came; and it is a remarkable circumstance, that while many both Greek and Roman writers ascribe the invention to the Syrians or Phenicians, the earliest occasion upon which history or tradition mentions the use of letters, was the delivery of the Decalogue to the people of Israel. Nevertheless, the failure of all notice in the sacred book that it was then a novelty, seems powerful indication that it was not so. Nothing, then, appears to me so probable as that it was derived from the antediluvian world; lost every where in migration, for want of convenient materials for its use, but preserved in Chaldea, and hence communicated to Egypt and other countries, as they acquired a settled government. The supposition of some, that hieroglyphical writing preceded and led to alphabetical, rests on mere conjecture. Homer's *γράμματα λυγρὰ* may have been picture-writing learnt from Egypt; but nothing remains to mark when alphabetical writing was not known in Chaldea and Egypt also. Picture-writing would represent matters to those who could not read; and might have been useful in the early times of modern Europe, when the nobles signed by their seals, and none could read but the clergy."\*

Calmet observes:—"We are not aware that we should say any thing improbable, if we considered Noah himself as practising the art of writing."†

"We should here close our remarks on early language; but there is a part of the subject which, although not immediately affecting our inquiry, is too interesting, and has occasioned too much controversy, to be passed over unno-

\* MITFORD'S "Greece," vol. i. pp. 121, 122.

† TAYLOR'S edition of "Calmet's Dictionary," p. 176.



ticed ; and that is, the probable period of the introduction of LETTERS, or characters representing words.

“ In the first place, has the difficulty, if not impossibility, of creating signs to represent a progressive language, such as we have attempted to describe,—has the difficulty of this, after the language has *progressed* for many ages, received that consideration which it deserves ? We think it has not ; and the more the intricacy and difficulty of fixing on signs, suited to represent the varied roots and branches of the sacred language, is reflected on, the more apparent will the *improbability* (to use the lightest term) appear of its having been the work of Moses, or of any man, inspired or uninspired. A language without signs can scarcely be methodical or regular in its construction ; a branchial or derivative language without signs is all but impossible ; and a derivative language, existing and branching out for thousands of years without signs, and then having them so devised as to suit every root or branch pertaining to it, is past the comprehension or belief of any rational being.

“ In the second place, there is not a reader of the Bible, however unacquainted with the language in which it was originally written, who is not aware of the astonishing effect of the introduction, or of the change, of one letter in a word. The instance of the word ‘Abram’ will suffice. *Abram* signifies ‘the high or mighty father ;’ one letter introduced so as to change it to *Abraham*, altered the meaning to ‘the father of many nations.’ The same power in individual letters existed in the time of Adam, as the instances formerly quoted prove.\* Could the language have possessed such a property without visible signs ? The thing is *impossible*. A sound could not have accomplished it ; for the same letter, according to its position or connexion, produced very different effects. These effects were produced by single consonants, not by *syllables* or sounds ; and these simple consonants are so expressive and powerful, that even the roots formed of them are not *capricious* compounds ; so

\* “ His giving names to the different creatures, as recorded in the original language.”



that there is not an *arbitrary* union of two letters in all the primitive speech. A language, the single letters or consonants of which possessed such power without signs for such consonants, is an absurdity, which only reluctance to own that language, in all its parts, was the gift of God, could ever have dignified with the name of a supposition.

“Unless, therefore, we are prepared to admit the most glaring difficulties and absurdities, we are driven to the conclusion, that language, in its signs as well as in its sounds, was the gift of God to Adam,—a gift which even the glimpses we can now obtain of it, prove to have been worthy of the source from which it came. It bears the marks of having been fitted to convey to man, at the first, the clearest conceptions of the powers, properties, laws, and operations, by which the Former of all things ordained that the universe should be sustained; to enable him, from them, metaphorically to express the passions, emotions, and feelings of his own mind and affections; and, from them, to understand, so far as finite capacity could do, the spiritual operations of God’s greater creation, of which the visible universe was a figure. It appears, also, to have possessed, in a most remarkable manner, the property of giving immutability to the *ideas* or *opinions* expressed by it, so far, at least, as to prevent a change of opinion without a change of language; and it was thus the proper, the divine vehicle for expressing and perpetuating *the truth of God*: and the names or nouns formed of its elements seemed most miraculously framed for rendering every object, animate or inanimate, to which they were applied, the bearer of some figurative or prophetic lesson.

“That language, darkened and disfigured, alas! by rabbinical puerilities and Heathen attempts to twist it to the rules of more worldly tongues, we still have in our hands: it still retains traces of its Divine origin, sufficiently plain to commend itself to the understanding of every one who is bold enough to refuse to look at Divine truths through the mists of Paganism, or to estimate revelation by the criteria of philosophy.”\*

\* MORRISON’S “Religious History of Man,” p. 81.



Bishop Cumberland, having given several reasons for his opinion, which do not admit of being separated from their connexion, says: "I believe, as Pliny hints, Mercury, or Thoth, to be rather a restorer of learning in Egypt and Canaan after the Flood, than its first inventor; though Sanchoniatho, for the credit of his own and the Egyptian nation and religion, and on the authority of Mercury's scribes, would have us believe him the first author, simply, or without the limitation which I suggest."\*

The Rev. Thomas Hartwell Horne, D.D., has entered into an elaborate investigation of the origin of writing. From his observations the following passages are extracted: "Were letters of human invention? Or was the knowledge of letters immediately communicated to man by the Supreme Being? Almost every writer, Mr. Astle particularly, has advocated the former opinion, and has urged it with much ingenuity; but when the subsequent hints are attentively considered, the author conceives that the latter sentiment will be found most consistent with reason and with probability."

Having disproved the barbarism imputed to the first race of mankind, our author proceeds: "Further: the longevity of the antediluvians was favourable to their improvement in any arts which their ingenuity had invented; accordingly we learn, that in the seventh generation they had made themselves acquainted with music, and the management of metals; and were, in the time of Noah, so far skilled in the science of practical navigation as to be able to build an ark.

"If, therefore, it was within the reach of human capacity to work out the invention of alphabetical writing, the antediluvians were as likely to make the discovery as any of their postdiluvian posterity.

"From these considerations, then, it is highly probable that the use of letters was known before the Flood.

"Let us now consider the circumstances in which we find mankind after they left the ark. Moses informs us, that 'the whole earth was of one language and one speech,' a manner of speaking which he would not have used before

\* CUMBERLAND'S "Sanchoniatho's Phenician History," p. 227.



men had multiplied to a very considerable number. And they, that is, the whole race of mankind, came to the land of Shinar, and from thence were scattered 'abroad upon the face of all the earth.' (Gen. xi. 1—9.) That we may be the better satisfied of this fact, the account is repeated, with the addition of this express circumstance, that it was the language of all the earth which was then confounded. From this account of Moses, it is evident that all mankind kept together till the confusion at Babel, when they separated, or 'from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of *all* the earth:' the sons of Japheth, northwardly, through Mesopotamia and Syria, to people Europe and its adjacent islands; the sons of Shem, to countries on the east; while Ham, with his descendants, peopled the neighbouring countries, together with Palestine, Egypt, and the rest of Africa.

"Now, in the course of such a dispersion as this, a state of barbarism may be met with: all the arts and accomplishments of civilisation would be neglected, and soon lost, among men whose time and labour were wholly occupied with providing the immediate necessities of life; and were we to suppose a people in comfortable circumstances to be acquainted with letters, and to be reduced to a state of difficulty and necessity like that just mentioned, their letters would soon be forgotten, and their language degenerate into what may properly be called 'a jargon.' This was the case of the emigrants from Shinar, and would be most remarkably so with those who should be removed to the most distant settlements; accordingly those who, by repeated removals, wandered to Europe by one way, and to India by another, lost the use and knowledge of letters entirely. Those who continued in or near Shinar, free from the solitudes and distractions attending a removal, probably retained the knowledge and use of them in their perfection; while such as, though obliged to move, did not go so far, lost their knowledge of letters in part only; still retaining enough of them to be a foundation, both of reviving them among themselves, and teaching them to others.



“As the removal to Canaan was not a great one, the people who went thither would probably remember enough of letters to be able to revive them soon after they had made themselves easy in their settlements; and being, by their situation, led to the practice of navigation and commerce, they would carry the knowledge of letters to those nations who had lost them, and thus be accounted their inventors. Agreeably to which Quintus Curtius, Lucan, Hesychius, and Porphyry ascribe the invention of letters to the Phenicians.

“The progenitors of Abraham were among those who stayed in or near the land of Shinar, and would probably retain much of the language spoken before the Dispersion; and, as they did not leave Ur, their native settlement in that country, until Abraham was seventy-five years old, and then removed not far, they would not be likely to lose or change their language, or forget the use of letters, on the supposition that they had been acquainted with them.

“The result, then, of the preceding observations may thus be briefly stated. Tradition speaks most strongly for the use of letters first known and practised in those parts from whence the dispersion of mankind was made. Hence it is reasonable to presume,—

“1. That letters were known before the Dispersion.

“2. That (as already intimated) they were known even before the Deluge.

“3. That the knowledge of language and of letters was communicated by the Almighty Creator to man.”\*

Whiston, the translator of Josephus, gives his judgment on the origin of writing, in a note on a passage in which the Jewish historian, referring to the generations from Adam to Noah, observes:—“Those who then lived having noted down, with great accuracy, both the births and deaths of illustrious men,” &c. On this passage, the remark of the translator is:—“Josephus here takes notice, that these ancient generations were first set down by those that then lived, and from them were transmitted down to posterity; which

\* HORNE'S “Introduction to Bibliography,” pp. 77—83.



I suppose to be the true account of the matter ; for there is no reason to imagine that men were not taught to read and write soon after they were taught to speak, and perhaps all by the Messiah himself.”\*

The Rev. James Esdaile, in speaking of the progress of the arts before the Flood, says : “ It is absurd to suppose that the antediluvians were unacquainted with letters ; at any rate, we have never heard of any society which had made such progress in the arts as the antediluvians certainly did, without being acquainted with the use of letters.”†

The learned author of a very recent work on ancient Egypt, in a chapter full of important information on this subject, has the following remarks :—

“ I only at present observe, that the Hebrew alphabet is demonstrably older than the giving of the law, and that I think there are good grounds for believing it to have been *ab origine* ; and in this sense do I adopt the assertion of Pliny : *Literas semper arbitror Assyrias fuisse*. (vii. 57.)

“ The facts and instances which I have adduced ought to have made men very slow in conceding that any one alphabet was derived from pictorial representations ; how much more so to take for granted, as men commonly do, that all alphabets have had such derivations ! And when they cannot by any ingenuity twist rectangular letters into animal forms, they will rather resort to arrow-heads, or nail-heads, or sprigs of trees, or notched sticks, than to a pre-existent alphabet, with which a little historical research would indisputably furnish them.”‡

The Rev. Edward Davies, in his “ Celtic Researches,” § observes :—

“ There can be little doubt that the primitive ages possessed some means, beside oral tradition, of recording and perpetuating their several branches of knowledge ; but respecting the nature of these means we are left somewhat

\* JOSEPHUS, *Antiq.* lib. i. cap. iii. sect. 3.

† Edinburgh Encyclopædia, article *Antediluvian*.

‡ “ Egyptian History, from Monuments still in Existence,” pp. 46, 47. Fraser.

§ Pages 34, 45.



in the dark. It is universally allowed that no human device could have answered this purpose better than alphabetical writing. *Were the early ages acquainted with an alphabet?* This has been a great question. Amongst some ancient and modern nations we find picture-writing, hieroglyphical representations, or else arbitrary signs of ideas, employed as the general means of preserving memorials. But whether any of these are the remains of primitive art, or the resources of those societies which had forgotten the accomplishments of their forefathers, is another question. Our lower mechanics and labourers, who have never been taught to write, use a variety of marks and figures, to record their little transactions; and if one of these families were removed to a sequestered island, and secluded from other society, this would become their established mode of writing, though they were descended from a people who had the use of an alphabet.

“It is an indisputable fact, that books or memorials in writing, and consequently reading, were things well understood before the giving of the law. The sacred tables certainly consisted of alphabetical writing; and the preceding inscriptions were undoubtedly of the same kind, and in the same characters.

“It may be demanded, ‘How happens it, if the art of writing was really understood in the primitive ages, that Moses has not recorded the names of its inventors amongst other antediluvian instructors?’ To this it may be answered, that the Mosaic history of the antediluvians is a mere epitome. The historian records only the inventions of one family, that of Cain. His catalogue must have omitted many great arts which the antediluvians possessed. Who was the first carpenter, or the first weaver? The design of Moses seems to have been, not so much to mark the antiquity of the arts known in his time, as to preserve a memorial of eminent persons; more particularly in that family which was now wholly cut off from the face of the earth.

“History furnishes no instance of an exact chronology having been preserved for a series of ages by any people



who were wholly illiterate. Relative dates, and the enumeration of months and days, would soon become unmanageable in oral tradition.

“The enumeration of circumstances in the history of the Deluge, clearly points out the early use of letters, or of something equivalent to letters. Here we have upon record the particular month, and the day of the month, on which the rain began, the number of days it continued, the period during which the earth was covered, the day on which the ark first rested, on which the tops of the mountains were first *seen*, on which the face of the ground *was first observed to be dry*, and on which Noah and his family descended from the ark.

“Here, again, Moses records not the phenomena of the Deluge as simple facts, but he records them as they had been seen and observed by Noah. He does not tell us upon what day the mountains first emerged from the waters, but upon what day *their tops are seen*.

“If to all these presumptive arguments of the high antiquity of writing, we add, that the most ancient nations, those that were first regularly settled, and were most tenacious of their primitive customs and institutions, are found to have possessed the art of alphabetical writing; and that several of those societies regarded letters as co-eval with the nation itself, if not with the human race; we shall have abundant reason to conclude that letters were certainly known to mankind before the separation of families, and very probably before the Deluge.”

It has been thought best to give the arguments and opinions of the authors cited, in their own words, in preference to digesting the substance of the whole into one continued line of argumentation; although such a course may have necessarily led sometimes to a repetition of the same observation, and, at others, to some little discordance of sentiment on minor points. This plan has, however, presented the arguments in favour of the early use of letters in such variety of form, and in opposition to such conflicting objections, as perhaps no other mode would have secured; while



it has arrayed on our side a weight of authority, which must greatly commend the view here taken to general acceptance.

If what has been already advanced be considered in the spirit of candour, and apart from all preconceived partialities, it must at least appear very probable that the early generations of mankind, and perhaps even our first parents, were acquainted with alphabetic writing.

The opinion which has been advanced concerning the early use of letters, if well-founded, may reasonably lead us to expect that some traditions of an early literature,—some notices of books and writings,—will be found in the works of ancient authors ; and perhaps some fragments of those early productions may be expected to have survived the ravages of time, and to be preserved even to the present day.

Admitting the reasonableness of these expectations, and that they afford means, to a certain extent, of testing the soundness of the arguments which have been given, it is necessary to guard against carrying our hopes in this respect too far. The perishable nature of writing-materials, the ruinous effects of the civil and political convulsions to which the ancient world was specially liable, as well as a variety of other causes of decay and destruction, must be taken into the account. We are taught a lesson on this subject, by the fact, that Assyria and Babylon, Persia and Egypt, Phenicia, Tyre, and Carthage, were all mighty empires ; were all possessed of alphabetical characters, literature, and science ; and all continued for centuries after the period with which we have to do in the investigation of this subject ; and yet all the authenticated literary remains of these nations have been recently published in *two languages*, and the whole contained in a small octavo volume.

Now, admitting that the world, from the Creation, possessed letters and literary means as abundant as any of these renowned empires, what portion could we expect would survive the Flood, and the thousands of years which have since passed away ? and what evidence of the existence of this literature and science could we hope to find preserved to the present time ? A careful examination of the subject may,



however, afford sufficient evidence, that letters and science were known in the earliest ages of the world.

It is very generally admitted, that the Pentateuch and the book of Job are the most ancient writings now in existence. What references do we find in them to the subject under consideration?

The first mention of writing in scripture is found in Exodus xvii. 14 :—" And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book ; and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua : for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven." This command was given immediately after the defeat of the Amalekites near Horeb, and before the arrival of the Israelites at Mount Sinai. The Hebrew word here translated "write," is the same as is afterwards and generally used to signify, drawing letters or literal characters.

There is not the least hint that writing was then newly invented : on the contrary, we may conclude, that Moses understood what was meant by "writing in a book ;" for he certainly would not have been commanded to write in a book, had he been ignorant of the art of writing, and had he not known what was meant by "a book." This previous acquaintance of Moses, and also of the Israelitish people, with writing and books, is farther proved by the manner in which Moses speaks in many passages.

In Exodus xxviii. 21, we read : "And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Israel, TWELVE, according to their names, *like the engravings of a signet* ; every one with his name shall they be according to the twelve tribes." And again, in verse 36 : "And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, like the engravings of a signet, *Holiness to the Lord.*" Can language be more expressive? Is it not evident that this sentence must have been in words and letters? And is it not equally evident, that the people to whom they were addressed were well acquainted with writing? Other passages of the same sacred writer confirm this opinion. The book of Job also refers to writing and books, as is proved by the following



well-known passage : " O that my words were now written ! O that they were printed in a book ! that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever ! " (Job xix. 23, 24.) Thus it appears, that, about the period of the exodus, the Israelites were well acquainted with writing and books.

It will now be important to search out any notices of such knowledge in the earlier ages. The first case to which we direct attention is the purchase by Abraham of the field and cave of Machpelah. No mention is here made of any writing ; yet the manner in which the terms of the purchase are recorded is calculated to produce an impression that something like a written contract was drawn up between the parties : " And the field of Ephron, which was in Machpelah, which was before Mamre, the field, and the cave which was therein, and all the trees that were in the field, that were in all the borders round about, were made sure." (Gen. xxiii. 17.) Here it may be asked, Is not this the abstract of a title-deed ? Observe, how orderly and distinctly the several particulars are stated :—1. " And the field of Ephron," 2. " which was in Machpelah," 3. " which was before Mamre," 4. " *even* the field," 5. " and the cave which was therein," 6. " and all the trees that were in the field," 7. " also the trees which were in all the borders round about," 8. " were made sure unto Abraham for a possession in the presence " (literally " before the eyes "\*) " of the children of Heth." From the accuracy and minuteness of these provisions, as recorded by Moses, and considering that this occurred about four hundred years before his time, and that the ground in question was held as the only land which Abraham or his descendants possessed in Canaan until the exodus,—it having been retained for a burying-place, and Sarah, Isaac, and Jacob having been interred there,—it does appear highly probable that the text is only a copy of the contract *written* on the occasion. This opinion derives support from the fact, that when

\* GREENFIELD'S version. This view is supported by Calmet, article *Bible*.



Joshua invaded Canaan, one of the cities spoken of is called Kirjath-sepher, which means, "the city of the book:" it is rendered by the Septuagint, "the city of letters."

We now ascend to the time of Enoch, who, the scriptures inform us, delivered prophecies; whether they were written, or preserved by tradition, can be made matter of argument only on the ground of probability. Jude, an inspired apostle, says: "And Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." (Jude 14, 15.) Those who have maintained that this prophecy was written, have generally associated it with a book ascribed to Enoch, which has been preserved to modern times. But this connexion does not appear at all necessary; the book, though written by Enoch, might have been lost, and replaced by a fictitious production; or it might have been so much altered as to be of no authority. The plain fact is, that an inspired writer attributes to this antediluvian patriarch the words we have given; and the inquiry arises, Is it probable that these *words* would have been preserved five thousand years, if they had not been *written*? We think not.

In the speech of Lamech, recorded by Moses, (Gen. iv. 23, 24,) we have another such instance. This patriarch was contemporary with Enoch, each being the seventh from Adam; and this fragment, of which the following is given as a literal translation, is pronounced by bishop Lowth to be an indubitable specimen of ancient poetry:—\*

"And Lamech said unto his wives,  
Adah and Zillah, Hear ye my voice,  
Wives of Lamech, hearken to my speech;  
For I have slain a man for wounding me,  
And a young man for having bruised me.  
If Cain shall be avenged seven-fold,  
Also Lamech seventy and seven."

\* LOWTH on "Hebrew Poetry," p. 44.



Surely, such instances afford some reason for believing, that letters were known, learning cultivated, and books written, even at that early period. And if this has any foundation in fact; if, as Josephus asserts, and as the preceding cases appear to confirm, records of what transpired in the early ages "were noted down at the time, and preserved," even to the days of Moses; then we might expect that the Jewish lawgiver would have used such helps in his various writings. We find that other sacred writers did so, not only in the books of Joshua, Kings, and Chronicles, but also in the prophets. Nor can this possibly affect the inspired character of the holy scriptures. We have, for instance, these words in Numbers xxi. 28, 29: "There is a fire gone out of Heshbon, a flame from the city of Sihon: it hath consumed Ar of Moab, and the lords of the high places of Arnon. Woe to thee, Moab! thou art undone, O people of Chemosh." The inspired writer here ascribes the passage to "them that speak in proverbs," proving that the terms had been previously in use: the author's name is not given. Yet Jeremiah (xlviii. 45, 46) uses the same words in his prediction against Moab, with scarcely a shadow of variation. Surely the passage in Numbers, or in the prophet, is not less a part of inspired truth, because it had been previously written!

The expectations to which we have alluded are confirmed by a careful examination of the book of Genesis. No person can attentively read the first ten chapters, without perceiving breaks and repetitions in the narrative, and other internal evidence, that the inspired writer did really use records of a preceding age which had been preserved to his own time. Beginning at the first chapter, if we read to chapter ii. 3, we have a continuous narrative of the Creation, and of the appointment of the sabbath. In this part the name of the Creator is in the original *Elohim*, rendered in our translation "God," which is repeated thirty-five times. From the end of this section, and with chapter ii. 4, begins a separate and distinct account, the first words of which are, "These are the generations of the heavens and the



earth, when they were created," &c. From this place to the end of chapter iii., we have another and shorter account of the Creation, followed by a history of the Fall. In this part the name of the Divine Being, except in the address of the serpent to Eve, is invariably *Jehovah Elohim*, and translated "LORD God," which is repeated twenty times. In chapter iv., which contains a history of Cain and Abel, and of the descendants of the former, the sacred name is *Jehovah*, with only one exception. The use of these terms, as here described, appears to be a peculiarity which could scarcely have happened in the original and entire composition of one age, one country, and one man. For, however the mysterious meaning of the terms themselves may be discriminated, yet *Elohim* in the first chapter, and *Jehovah Elohim* in the second and third, are evidently used in a synonymous sense, and precisely the same operations are ascribed to them. Chapter v. begins with an appropriate title, which more particularly indicates a distinct and independent composition: "This is the book" (or record) "of the generations of Adam." Here, again, the history of the creation of man is briefly recited, as an introduction to this separate book, which is complete in its kind; for it begins from the Creation, and concludes with the birth of the sons of Noah. May it not be regarded as a transcript from an authentic genealogical table or pedigree, which had been regularly kept in the family of this patriarch? We have afterwards, "These are the generations of Noah," and, "These are the generations of the sons of Noah."\*

It may be urged, that this is not the manner in which a continuous narrative would be written by one person, and that Moses did not adopt it in other parts of his history; but is it not precisely what might be expected, if accounts of the Creation written by some of the early patriarchs had been preserved to the time of Moses?

These views are not new: many learned men on the Continent and in our own country have advocated them,

\* DAVIES'S "Celtic Researches," pp. 40, 41.



and have attempted to show, that several historical documents, handed down from the early patriarchs, were preserved in an uncorrupted state, to the time of the Jewish lawgiver, by whom they were copied nearly in their original form, except that they were interwoven by him into one continuous narrative. This inference they chiefly derive from the following considerations :—

1. The book of Genesis contains several repetitions, or double narratives, of the same events.

2. If these duplicate narratives are compared with each other, they may be distinguished by characteristic differences of style.

3. The repetitions are too extensive, and the characteristic differences too distinctly marked, to admit of any other explanation than that which this hypothesis assigns.

As a specimen of this analysis, a part of Eichhorn's comparison of the two histories of the Deluge is subjoined. It will be observed, that the passages placed opposite to each other contain two complete and continued narratives. In one of these the Deity is distinguished by the term "Elohim," in the other, by "Jehovah;" and there is only one exception to this remark. The style differs in other respects. The record in which the word "Elohim" is used is more prosaic and circumstantial; the other is expressed more briefly, and in more striking and poetical phraseology.

RECORD IN WHICH THE NAME  
"JEHOVAH" IS USED.

Genesis vi. 5. And Jehovah saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Verse 7. And Jehovah said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

RECORD IN WHICH THE WORD  
"ELOHIM" IS USED.

Genesis vi. 12. And the Elohim looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

Verse 13. And the Elohim said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.



RECORD IN WHICH THE NAME  
"JEHOVAH" IS USED.

Chapter vii. 1. And Jehovah said unto Noah, Because thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.

Verse 2. Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts unclean by two, the male and his female.

Verse 3. Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth.

Verse 4. For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth.

Verse 5. And Noah did according to all that Jehovah commanded him.

RECORD IN WHICH THE WORD  
"ELOHIM" IS USED.

Verse 9. Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with the Elohim.

Verse 19. And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female.

Verse 20. Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing upon the earth after his kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive.

Verse 17. And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die.

Verse 22. Thus did Noah; according to all that the Elohim had commanded him, so did he.

This, although less than half of the entire "comparison," will be sufficient to show the existence of a double narrative. Dr. Prichard, from whose valuable work this and some of the preceding remarks have been taken, observes: "The selection of the passages which are thus brought into comparison is, perhaps, in some instances, forced, and assumed without sufficient discrimination. Yet, after making all allowances for critical artifice, it seems impossible to deny that there is some foundation for the author's hypothesis."\*

If these references to holy scripture be taken together, and the inferences fairly deducible from them be allowed their just weight in the argument, it is not too much to say, that the existence of literature in the earliest ages is rendered very probable. This probability will, however, be greatly increased, if we collect the traditions which different parts of the ancient world afford us on this subject.

\* PRICHARD'S "Examination of Egyptian Chronology," p. 128.



Before proceeding to other nations, it may be proper to call attention to the important fact, that all Jewish tradition is on the side of our argument. However men in modern times may choose to speculate on Moses having invented letters, or having been taught to write by the Almighty at Sinai, the Jewish rabbies, with all their veneration for that holy man, never entertained such an idea. They knew the original of the world, and the state of society in the early ages, so much better than those who draw their knowledge of antiquity from the Roman or Greek classics, that they were saved from so great an error. According to them, and the general current of their tradition, there never was a time since the creation of man in which their ancestors, in a direct line to the first pair, were not favoured with the arts of civilized life, and with every means of mental and moral cultivation, which the boundless goodness of the Almighty has imparted to his earthly family. These are, indeed, recollections in which any people would glory.

This is the origin of all that is said about the Book of Adam, the studies of Seth, the writings of Enoch, the teaching of Shem, and the learning of Abraham. In reference to the latter eminent individual, his own descendants are not the only people who have preserved traditions of his knowledge.

According to Berosus, the Chaldean records state, that, "after the Deluge, in the tenth generation was a certain man among the Chaldeans renowned for his justice and great exploits, and for his skill in the celestial sciences." \*

Eupolemus says, that "in the tenth generation, in the city Camarina, of Babylonia, which some called Urie, and which signifies 'a city of the Chaldeans,' the thirteenth in descent, lived Abraham, of a noble race, and superior to all others in wisdom; of whom they relate, that he was the inventor of astrology and the Chaldean magic; and that, on account of his eminent piety, he was esteemed by God. It

\* CORY'S "Fragments," p. 36.



is further said, that, under the direction of God, he removed, and lived in Phenicia, and there taught the Phenicians the motion of the sun and moon, and all other things; for which reason he was held in great reverence by their king.”\*

In addition to the above, Jackson refers to Artapanus, Philo Judæus, the Recognitions of Clement, Eusebius, and others, as bearing witness to the learning of Abraham.†

The Chaldean records, preserved by Berosus, are equally explicit as to the existence of books in the early ages. He says, referring to the time before the Deluge, that “Oannes wrote concerning the generation of mankind, and their civil polity.” Berosus then proceeds to record a part of what had been thus written, which extends to some length, and is a fabulous history of the Creation, &c. The same authority, in an account of the Deluge, having referred to Xisuthrus, (Noah,) proceeds to say: “In his time happened a great Deluge, the history of which is thus described: ‘The Deity, Cronus, appeared to him in a vision, and warned him, that, upon the fifteenth day of the month Daesius, there would be a flood, by which mankind would be destroyed. He, therefore, enjoined him to write a history of the beginning, procedure, and conclusion of all things; and to bury it in the City of the Sun, at Sippara.’” The account, having detailed the circumstances of the Deluge, states that afterward “the writings were sought for and found at Sippara, and ordered to be made known to all mankind.”‡

Sir William Jones informs us, that the Persians also have traditions of the existence of books in the earliest ages. He says: “Mohsan assures us, that, in the opinion of the best-informed Persians, who professed the faith of Hushang, the first monarch of Iran and of the whole earth was Mahabad; that he received from the Creator, and promulgated among men, a sacred book in a heavenly language, to which the Musselman author gives the Arabic title of *Desatir*,

\* CORY’S “Fragments,” p. 57.

† JACKSON’S “Chronological Antiquities,” vol. i. p. 221.

‡ CORY’S “Fragments,” pp. 27—29.



or 'Regulations.' ”\* And Sir J. Malcolm states, that this Mahabad was, in the estimation of the ancient Persians, “the person left at the end of the last great cycle ; and, consequently, the father of this present world. He and his wife, having survived the former cycle, were blessed with a numerous progeny : to improve their condition, he planted gardens, invented ornaments, and forged weapons. He also taught men to take the fleece from the sheep, and to make clothing ; he built cities, constructed palaces, fortified towns, and introduced among his descendants all the benefits of art and commerce.”†

Here is an evident allusion to Adam or Noah, possibly to both ; as, according to the doctrine of the east, the same great father is said to appear at the end of each cycle.

The ancient mythology of India contains similar traditions. “In the days of Buddha Guatama,” (Noah,) “when the earth poured forth an inundation of waters, to assist him against the Assurs, or impenitent antediluvians, five holy scriptures descended from above, which confer powers of knowledge and retrospection ; and respecting which it is said, ‘Whoever shall read and study them, his soul shall not undergo transmigration ; and whoever shall have faith therein, heaven and bliss shall be the reward of his piety.’”‡

Again : in the first Avatar of Vishnu, we are told, that the divine ordinances which flowed from the lips of Bramah were stolen by the demon Hayagriva, while he slumbered at the close of a prior world. For the purpose of recovering them, Vishnu became incarnate, in the form of a fish. Under that form he preserved Menu in an ark, while the whole world was inundated by a deluge ; and, when the waters retired, he slew the demon, and recovered the holy books from the bottom of the ocean.§ We are further informed, that the first Menu left a book of regulations, or divine ordinances.||

\* Sixth Discourse, Of the Persians.

† MALCOLM'S “Persia,” vol. i. p. 9.

‡ “Asiatic Researches,” vol. ii. pp. 386, 387.

§ FABER'S “Pagan Idolatry,” vol. ii. p. 150.

|| “Asiatic Researches,” vol. ii. p. 59.



What the Vedas and the Institutes are to the Hindoos, the laws of Minos were to the ancient Cretans. I think, with Sir William Jones, that Menu and Minos are clearly the same person; consequently, in the laws of Minos we again recognise those holy books which the Pagans deemed co-eval with or prior to the Deluge.

“Menu, or Buddha, under these precisely oriental titles, was equally venerated by the Celts of Britain: and here again we find the same belief in books no less ancient than the Flood. The Druids styled them the ‘Books of the Pheryllt,’ and the ‘Writings of Prydain or Hu;’ and I hesitate not to denominate them ‘the British Vedas.’ Ceridwen consults them before she prepares the mysterious caldron which shadows out the awful catastrophe of the Deluge; and Taliesin, while he speaks of them as the first object of anxiety to the bards, declares that, should the waves again disturb their foundation, he would again conceal them deep in the cell of the holy sanctuary, which represented the interior of the ark. Here he evidently alludes to a concealment of those sacred volumes during the prevalence of the flood, like that of the writings of the Chaldean Xisuthrus.

“A similar belief in the existence of such books prevails also among the Mahomedans; and they doubtless, I think, derived it from the same Pagan source as the Jews. According to a Mussulman writer, cited by Stanley, Abraham found among the Sabeans the long-lost chest of Adam, which contained the book of that patriarch, and likewise those of Seth and Edris, or Enoch. How the chest was supposed to have been preserved during the time of the Deluge, does not appear. The Mahomedans tell us, that the books of Adam, Seth, Enoch, and Abraham, are now entirely lost: but the persuasion, that they once existed, serves to show how widely the notion which I am now considering had extended itself.”\*

Many may be disposed to esteem these traditions very

\* FABER’S “Pagan Idolatry,” vol. ii. pp. 150, 151.



lightly, on account of the fabulous matter with which they are mixed up. It should, however, be considered, that this is, in reality, no valid objection against the tradition itself. We find numerous references to the Creation and the Deluge, associated with a mass of mythology and fable, which present to the eye of a careless observer nothing but a jargon of absurdities : yet, notwithstanding this, one point is clear and undeniable,—the persons who wrote these, however ignorant, or imaginative, or disposed to allegorize, must have had an idea of both these great events. To deny this, is as unreasonable as to refuse to believe in the Trojan war, because of the celestial machinery introduced into the “*Iliad*.”

It is on this principle that we value the traditions which have been given respecting early-written books. These traditions concur in teaching, that books existed prior to the Deluge, and that some were preserved from destruction at that period. The persons who transmitted these to us, however ignorant in other respects, however mistaken in points of detail, must themselves have believed in the leading facts.

Another important consideration is the era to which these traditions must be ascribed. If an isolated reference to this circumstance had been found in any one or two of these countries, it might fairly be supposed that it had been devised in times comparatively recent, for the accomplishment of some local object, or for the gratification of national vanity. The case, however, is widely different. These traditions are found to exist in countries the most distant, and separate from each other,—Chaldea, Egypt, Phenicia, Persia, Hindostan, Crete, and Britain ; and found, too, amongst the earliest accounts of those nations. They come down to us through persons of almost all religions,—Parsees, Hindoos, Greeks, Druids, Mahomedans, and Jews. May it not, then, be asked, At what time, under such circumstances, could these traditions have had their origin, except when all these different tribes made one people ? To suppose that nations so widely extended, so separated from



each other, so strongly influenced by opposite religious systems, should all find it necessary to invent the fable of these ancient books, together with the circumstance of their preservation, is scarcely conceivable. The conclusion, then, to which Mr. Faber has come, appears inevitable :—"The same notion of certain sacred books ascribed to the great Father could not have prevailed in regions so widely separated from each other, unless the inhabitants of those regions had derived it, together with their system of theology, from a common centre."\*

If this be admitted, the origin of these traditions is carried up to the time of Nimrod, and to the plains of Shinar. This invests them with very great importance. For, if it be believed, that before the Dispersion, when the descendants of Noah yet remained as one family, and within a few centuries of the Deluge, they held an opinion, that books were written prior to that terrible event, and that some were preserved by the holy patriarch ; then the existence of an antediluvian literature might be considered as proved. And to this conclusion the weight of evidence manifestly conducts us.

Science generally accompanies literature. Seldom does one branch of knowledge prosper and flourish alone : the cultivation which gives existence to one, promotes the other. Our inquiries, therefore, shall now be directed to the science of the earliest ages.

It is a settled point, that before the Deluge arts were practised ; this implies some acquaintance with science. Not only were dwellings erected, cities also were built. Metallurgy was understood and practised ; music was known, and musical instruments were manufactured ; agricultural operations were carried on ; and, what appears in itself to be decisive, the ark was built.

It is difficult to conceive of a state of society in which such arts could be cultivated, and yet science remain unknown. This is not the place to go into any description

\* "Pagan Idolatry," vol. ii. p. 151.



of the ark ; it is evident, however, that its capacity was great, and that to build it would, even now, be a difficult task. It is also worthy of observation, that we have not the slightest intimation of any supernatural aid having been given in its construction. The size and form appear to have been specified, and Noah was then left to carry out the plan by the use of natural means. If it had not been so, it is probable, as the scripture account of the Deluge is particular and circumstantial, that some notice would have been taken of divine interposition.

Our attention must now be directed to the earliest notices of science in the different primitive nations of the earth. This course, which is the only one calculated to impart solid information, will greatly confirm the opinions already advanced. On this branch of the subject it is intended to confine our observations principally to astronomy ; first, because this science could not have been cultivated without a knowledge of arithmetic, geometry, and other kindred branches of knowledge ; and, secondly, because it has left stronger evidence of its existence on the pages of history than any other.

China, one of the oldest existing empires of the world, an empire perfectly isolated from Europe, and entirely unconnected with Phenician or Egyptian learning, presents a very fair subject for inquiry.

Amongst the Chinese we find notices of astronomical science in their earliest history. The testimony of Bailly on this point is important. He says, "The strong belief the Chinese entertain, that the monuments of Fohi contain an ancient astronomy, established by that emperor, is a proof, not only of its existence among them, but that it was introduced into China by Fohi. We find in the Chou-King, a sacred book among the Chinese, and of great antiquity, that this astronomy contained doctrines of considerable refinement. Fohi, say they, constructed astronomical tables, assigned a figure to the heavenly bodies, and taught the science of their motion. The solstitial and equinoctial points were then discovered ; and, soon after, we find the



invention of the sphere, the actual period of the year consisting of three hundred and sixty-five days, six hours, with the bissextile, as well as the lunar periods reconciled to the motion of the sun. I have good reason to be of opinion, that all those branches of science belong to the time of Fohi.\*

This opinion is confirmed by repeated notices in the history of the following reigns. Hoanti, who governed about two hundred and fifty years after Fohi, is said to have established a board or tribunal for the promotion of astronomy; and Chienhu was called to the throne B.C. 2514, on account of his proficiency in this science. Now, when it is considered that Fohi began to reign B.C. 2953, or two hundred and thirty-two years after the Deluge, can it be supposed that all this progress in science could have taken place after that calamitous event? Here, again, the opinion of the historian of ancient astronomy may be referred to. "I appeal," says Bailly, "to the astronomer and the philosopher. How many ages ought we not to give to the study of the heavens before the motion of the sun could be so much as suspected? How many more ages must have elapsed before they could ascertain the four intervals of this period? Thus we must make the conclusion that I have already made, that the invention of the sphere, those doctrines which are only to be discovered by study and reflection, and a long course of careful observation, belong to a science already established, and long since in a state of progressive improvement. This is not the work of one man, or of one age."† In confirmation of this view, "Father Ko, a missionary born in China, says positively, that, in the time of Yao, B.C. 2357, the empire was of small extent, and but thinly peopled; but that knowledge of every sort, and particularly astronomy, in a state too far advanced for an infant nation, had been introduced among them."‡

The ancient Persians were acquainted, in the earliest ages of their history, with astronomy. Jemsheed, who reigned

\* BAILLY, "History of Asia," vol. i. p. 64.

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.* p. 65, note.



B.C. 2110, is said to have introduced the solar year, and to have caused the first day of it, when the sun enters *Aries*, to be celebrated by a splendid festival.\* We further learn from the Persian books, that there were formerly four bright stars which pointed out the four cardinal points of the heavens; and it is a very remarkable circumstance, in which chance could have no share, that about three thousand years before the Christian era Aldebaran and Antares were situated exactly in the two equinoctial points, while Regulus and the Southern Fish were placed in the two solstices.† It appears, therefore, that this people also, even beyond the limits of authentic history, were acquainted with the principles of astronomy; and that they preserved among them the result of observations made about a century after the Deluge.

That the ancient Egyptians were acquainted with astronomy, cannot be doubted, when it is considered that they were the instructors of Greece, and indeed of all Europe, in this and other sciences. They appear to have had traditions of the existence of this science extending back to the time of Vulcan, who in all probability is the same with Tubal-Cain; and they believed that it was cultivated amongst them by Thoth, the grandson of Ham.

The Jews entertained similar views of the acquaintance of their ancestors with astronomy. Josephus assures us, that the children of Seth “were the inventors of that peculiar sort of wisdom which is concerned with the heavenly bodies and their order;” and that they took care to record these discoveries, that they might not be lost to posterity. The small Genesis states that the pole-star was discovered by Enoch.

That astronomy was cultivated in Chaldea at a very early period, is well known. Alexander subdued Babylon B.C. 331; and we are informed that there then existed astronomical records, extending to upwards of one thousand nine hundred and three years before that time. The Chaldeans were acquainted with the period of six hundred years, and the

\* MALCOLM'S “Persia,” vol. i. p. 17.

† “Edinburgh Encyclopedia,” vol. ii. p. 584.



return of comets ; and possessed a rich fund of astronomical knowledge, which could only be obtained at an era in which this sublime science had been previously cultivated, and improved by a long-continued series of effort and observation.

India now claims attention. The Brahmins, in the infancy of Greece, were considered the depositaries of learning. To them Pythagoras journeyed for instruction, and to them many have considered the western world indebted for the light of science and civilisation. "In turning our attention to the Indian astronomy," says an eminent author, "we enter upon a more interesting field of research. Here we are not left to the guidance of facts contradictory or ill-authenticated, or of deceitful observations founded merely on conjecture. The astronomical tables of the Indians are in our own hands ; and with evidence almost as irresistible as that which attends the principles of the science, we can trace the remoteness of their origin, and survey the advancement of the human mind in the earliest ages.

"These precious remains of antiquity have been diligently examined and compared by the celebrated M. Bailly, in his *Traité de l'Astronomie Indienne et Orientale*, with that sagacity and eloquence which characterize all the writings of that illustrious but unfortunate astronomer. He has found that the epoch of the Tirvalore tables coincides with the year 3102 before the Christian era ; and has shown, by a train of sound and convincing argument, that this epoch is not fictitious, but founded on real observations which must have been made even before the commencement of the Caly-Yug. These high pretensions to antiquity, which M. Bailly has claimed for the Indian astronomy, have been admitted by many distinguished philosophers, and have been recently defended by our countryman, Professor Playfair, with an acuteness of reasoning, and a clearness of illustration, peculiar to that eloquent writer." \*

Some eminent philosophers, it is admitted, contend that those tables are not founded on observations made in the

\* "Edinburgh Encyclopedia," vol. ii. p. 585.



remote times alluded to, but that the modern Brahmins have arrived at this epoch (B.C. 3102) by carrying their calculations backwards. This notion, however, can scarcely be entertained, when it is considered, "that all the elements, as assumed at the epoch B.C. 3102, are nearly the same as if they had been determined by observation;" and that the tables containing them were brought to Europe in A.D. 1687. If, therefore, the Brahmins of that day had compiled them, tracing their way upwards to B. C. 3102, it is scarcely possible they could have been acquainted with the theory of gravitation, and the refinements of modern analysis, at that time but just discovered in Europe. Yet we have only one of the two alternatives,—either to believe that the Brahmins were in possession of this knowledge, or that the epoch of B.C. 3102 is real, and founded on observations previously made.

Sir David Brewster, from whose history of astronomy the preceding quotations have been made, in confirmation of this opinion, observes: "From the delineation of the zodiac, for example, which La Gentil brought from India, it appears that the star Aldebaran was 40' before the vernal equinox in 3102. Now if we take the precession of the equinoxes at  $50\frac{1}{3}''$ , and employ the inequality in the precession discovered by La Grange, we shall find, by calculating from the place of Aldebaran in 1750, that in the year 3102 this star was 13' beyond the vernal equinox; a result differing only 53' from the Indian zodiac. But the force of this argument does not terminate here: even if the Brahmins had been acquainted with the inequality of precession, and had applied it to the modern epoch of 1491, the 3'' of excess which they gave to the precession itself would have produced an error of  $3'' \times \frac{3102+1491}{1} = 3^{\circ} 49' 39''$  at the epoch of 3102.

"The mean longitude of the sun, according to the Brahmins, at the epoch of the tables of Tirvalore, is  $10^{\text{s}} 3^{\circ} 38' 13''$ ; and, according to the modern tables corrected by the inequality of precession discovered by La Grange, and amounting in the present case to  $1^{\circ} 45' 22''$ , the longitude of that luminary is  $10^{\text{s}} 2^{\circ} 51' 19''$ , differing only about 47'



from the determination of the Indians. The longitude of the moon, at the same epoch, by the Tirvalore tables, is  $10^{\text{s}} 6^{\circ} 0'$ ; and the same, corrected by the tables of Mayer, and corrected by the moon's acceleration, is  $10^{\text{s}} 6^{\circ} 37'$ : a coincidence so remarkable, that it could only arise from actual observation. Now, if we compute the places of the sun and moon at the commencement of the Caly-Yug, from the tables of the Greek and Arabian astronomers, or from those of Uleigh-Beigh, which were constructed at Samarcand in 1437, we shall find that the tables of Ptolemy give an error of  $11^{\circ}$  in the place of the sun and moon, while the tables of the Tartar prince produce an error of  $1^{\circ} 30'$  in the place of the sun, and of  $6^{\circ}$  in that of the moon. These results give additional strength to the former argument, and completely prove that the Indian astronomy is not the offspring of Greece or Arabia, and that the Tirvalore tables were not deduced from modern observations. Arguments of a similar nature, and equally strong with the preceding, might be deduced from the obliquity of the ecliptic, the length of the solar year, the aphelion and mean motion of Jupiter, and the mean motion of Saturn, and the equation of his centre as contained in the Indian tables; but from the limits of this article, we must refer our readers for further information to the writings of Bailly and Professor Playfair."\*

This is an outline of the facts and arguments which eminent astronomers furnish, in proof of the great antiquity of Indian astronomy.

We are, then, in respect of this science also, conducted back to the period of the first separation of families after the Deluge, or even beyond that, to the time when the post-diluvian race made but one people. The proofs of this are not found in one nation merely, but furnished by the Chinese, Persians, Egyptians, Jews, Chaldeans, and Indians; and all these concurring streams of evidence unite to establish the fact, that astronomy must have been cultivated

\* "Edinburgh Encyclopedia," vol. ii. p. 586.



previously to the Deluge, or it could not have exhibited such marks of its existence and power so soon after that calamitous event.

It is not, however, the mere existence of science at this early period which furnishes this evidence, but also and especially, the very peculiar circumstances in which it is found. It might have been reasonably supposed, that a science like astronomy would, in the earliest stages of its cultivation, have left some traces, on the pages of history, of its immaturity; that we should have seen the human mind putting forth all its energy to grasp the first principles of this sublime science. Yet what is the true state of the case, as presented to us by one every way competent to give an opinion? Sir David Brewster says, "From the general view which we have now given of the astronomy of the ancients, the mind is necessarily led to the conclusion which Bailly has drawn, that the rules and facts of the Egyptian, Chaldean, Indian, and Chinese astronomy are but the wrecks of a great system of astronomical science, which has been carried to a high degree of perfection in the early ages of the world. After those mighty revolutions in human affairs, amid which the principles of the science had been lost, the study of astronomy seems to have revived about the year 3102, when the loose materials which time had spared were carefully collected, and diffused through the different kingdoms of Asia. Hence the striking connexion that subsists between the various systems which prevailed among the eastern nations, and hence the numerous fragments of the science which have been transmitted to the present day. In examining these wrecks of the human mind, we every where find methods of calculation without the principles on which they are founded; rules blindly followed without being understood; phenomena without their explanation; and elements carefully determined; while others, more important and equally obvious, are altogether unknown. We cannot, therefore, regard these unconnected facts as the highest efforts of the ancients in the science of astronomy, or as results which they have



reached without the light of theory, or without the aid of long-continued observation. When the traveller contemplates the remains of ancient cities, and examines the broken statues, the shafts and capitals and pediments, which are dug from their ruins, does he consider these fragments as the highest efforts of the sculptor and the architect in the arts which they cultivated? Does he not, rather, turn in imagination to the columns and statues which they composed, to the temple which they supported or adorned, and to the living beings which worshipped within its walls?"

What language can more forcibly advocate the view we have taken than this? We believe that the antediluvians enjoyed alphabetical characters, literature, and science; that their minds were cultivated and adorned to a very great extent. Admitting for a moment that this was the case, "what mighty revolutions in human affairs" were so likely to break up this glorious fabric of knowledge, and to bury in ruins the great principles of science, as the universal flood? What can be more probable than that, a century after this dreadful event, those who then lived should gather up and preserve those "fragments of science" to which reference has been made? We need not proceed with these interrogatories: it will be seen that, while the entire conclusions of Bailly and Brewster, supported, as they are, by the authority of a man so learned, and possessing such reverence for scripture truth, as Sir William Jones, appear incapable of explanation on any other principle, on that just given all appears natural, consistent, and true.

We may here further observe, that some of the authors we have quoted had no intention, in their investigation of the subject, to establish the views which we entertain. Bailly, the friend and correspondent of Voltaire, was not likely to labour to illustrate the history, chronology, and intellectual character of the earliest races of mankind, as recorded in holy scripture. And Sir David Brewster, to whose able remarks we have referred so often, makes a laboured apology for the apparent discrepancy between his argument and the scripture account; as if unaware that



his scheme perfectly harmonizes with the history, and also with the chronology, of scripture as given in the Septuagint.

In addition, Bailly maintains that he had found other important evidence, confirmatory of the arguments already advanced. These we can only mention as summed up by himself. He observes, that he had found every where in the ancient world, not only astronomical improvements, which imply a corresponding progress in science, but also "civil institutions for chronology and the regulation of time, derived from one source, and identically the same; an entire and consistent system of music, whose two halves, separated by revolutions incident to human affairs, had been transported to the two extremities of the globe; a primitive measure which exists still every where in Asia, by itself, or in its component parts, and which was connected with a very ancient and accurate determination of the magnitude of the globe; one and the same Legislator for the sciences, arts, and religion; the same system of physics and theology; in fine, every where remaining traces of ignorance succeeding to light and science."

Admitting the importance and difficulty of the inquiry, we have endeavoured to trace up alphabetical characters, literature, and science to their origin.

In this effort we have found that, with respect to letters, the histories of the Egyptians, Babylonians, Phenicians, and Hebrews, carry up the use of alphabetical characters to the earliest possible period of their respective nations; that there is no solid reason for believing that hieroglyphics preceded the use of letters, but, on the contrary, grounds for concluding that an alphabet was in use before hieroglyphic characters; that the supposed barbarous condition of the first families of mankind is completely disproved both by sacred and profane history, and also by tradition; and that the most powerful arguments, and the authority of men eminent alike for literary attainments and a thorough knowledge of this particular question, unite in ascribing the existence of letters to the earliest ages of the world.

We have referred to literature, and taken the Bible, the



oldest literary composition extant. We find that it contains fragments composed in the earliest times ; that the writings of Moses bear internal evidence of having such remains of an ancient literature, wrought up in his history ; that Jewish tradition, in all ages, supports this notion ; that the traditions of every ancient people include references to ancient or sacred books preserved by the great father during the Deluge : and we see that these traditions must have had their origin prior to the Dispersion. Thus we have the whole ancient world, sacred and profane, bearing concurrent testimony to the existence of literature in the first ages.

We have admitted the natural connexion between science and literature, and have directed our attention to the question of its existence in the earliest period of the world. The result has been, that the sacred history of the first generations of mankind, especially that of the Deluge and of the building of the ark, warrants the conclusion that science must have been cultivated even at this early age ; that this opinion has been abundantly confirmed by the careful and profound researches of Bailly and others into the history of oriental astronomy ; that this sublime science was cultivated, and carried to a pitch of great refinement and perfection, even before the Flood ; and that, about a century after that event, the remains of this science were collected and arranged, fragments of which have been preserved to modern times.

It has been said, that "absolute certainty in matters of antiquity may result, either from an accumulation of various evidence, to such an amount that numerous deductions may be made from it without affecting the conclusion ; or from some particular coincidence of proof, of that kind which admits of no opposite supposition." \* On these principles the preceding facts and arguments are submitted to the judgment of the reader ; with some confidence, that, both the accumulation of evidence, and the particular coincidences of proof which they furnish, will be considered sufficient to

• TAYLOR'S "Historical Proof," p. 8.



evinced the existence of letters, literature, and science in the earliest age of the world.

If any now inquire how it is that the contrary opinion has so long and so popularly prevailed; how it is that these views, if well-founded, have not been generally shown and admitted; we answer:—

I. Infidel and sceptical writers, bent on disparaging the scripture history, as well as its doctrines, have laboured to show that man began his career of existence in barbarism, and gradually progressed until he reached his present elevated position.

II. Many of the most popular writers on holy scripture have, by adopting the Hebrew chronology, so abbreviated the age of the world, that some of the most striking points of evidence which have been cited in our favour, stand in direct opposition to the scripture account, on their system: they therefore not only lose this amount of evidence, but actually have it arrayed against them.

III. Most of the writers who have examined this subject in a satisfactory manner have done so incidentally, while discussing other important subjects; and therefore, by the voluminous extent, and consequent high price, of their works, have sealed up their researches from all but a few persons of property and leisure.

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WE have brought these investigations to a close. They have occupied more time than we had anticipated; but their importance demanded that, if possible, we should place before the reader evidence sufficiently conclusive to enable him to decide with satisfactory and well-grounded confidence on the chronology and learning of the ancient world. Although we are aware that the subject is not exhausted, that it might with greater ease have been expanded into a volume than condensed into a Preliminary Dissertation, we hope the result will be satisfactory. A few general observations on each section of our inquiry will be necessary; and with these our Introduction will conclude.



1. We shall not be surprised if the freedom with which we have referred to errors in the sacred text should, by some individuals, be thought deserving of grave reprehension. We assure all such persons, that we write under the influence of the most reverential credence of the revealed truth of God. But we do not think that the concealment of error is calculated to promote truth. And, as we have previously observed, we think it impossible to over-estimate the combined wisdom and mercy which united to place, in the hands of three independent religious communities, as many separate copies of the word of truth before the excision of Israel took place, and the desperate energy of that people was exerted against the gracious purposes of God and his Anointed.

2. We are also apprehensive, lest the stigma affixed to such tampering with scripture as in honesty of purpose we have been compelled to call "a fraudulent corruption of the sacred text," should be ascribed to a spirit of bigotry. Perfectly unconscious of the existence of such an uncharitable feeling, we are confident that it cannot have exercised any influence on the judgment which we have formed. The Jews of that day were placed in circumstances which their descendants can scarcely estimate; and the efforts employed to mystify and adulterate certain dates which we have been compelled to detail, and which we sincerely believe actually took place, are no more to be regarded as a reflection on the principles or religion of the Jews generally, than is the excision of the second commandment by the early Saxon church (effected, as it was, with the concurrence of our *great* Alfred) to be regarded as a reflection on the Christianity of England in the present day.

3. No one who will be at the *trouble* of perusing the entire work will charge us with any disposition to shrink from upholding the authority of holy scripture, however it may be impugned by the professed wisdom of this world. There is no part of our duty to which we shall address ourselves with greater diligence and devotedness than to the resistance of the pretensions of "science falsely so called," in its proud and in-



sidious aggression on the truth of revelation. But this determination imposes on us the necessity of the utmost vigilance fully to ascertain what is actually revealed truth, lest, by vindicating error on the hallowed plea of inspiration, we injure the cause we are so anxious to uphold, and truth be impaired in the hands of its friends. We believe this has been done; and the practice has had a most pernicious influence. Revelation and sound knowledge have been placed in opposition. Let a man carefully study the history of Egypt, Assyria, or China, or even of astronomy, and he is instantly confronted with facts bearing the impress of sterling historic truth, which directly contradict the abbreviated Hebrew chronology. Does not his mind naturally deduce the conclusion, that revelation can be sustained only by the abandonment of legitimate research? that revealed truth can only stand by the renunciation of historic truth?

The chronology which, by the force of evidence, we have been compelled to adopt, frees us from all difficulty. We are aware of, and we can explain, the myriads of years which are presented to us in the fictions of Indian and Egyptian fabulous history; but of this we are certain, that no fact, sustained by ordinary evidence, is presented to us by any nation in the ancient world, which extends beyond the chronology of the Septuagint. This in itself is an important consideration; and, taken in connexion with what has been advanced, fully assures us of the soundness of our decision.

4. Having, as far as our means and limits extend, settled the chronology of the early ages, we proceeded to investigate the intellectual character and learning of mankind during this period. In this pursuit, we first found reason to reject entirely the doctrines which certain philosophers have promulgated, and which have obtained much popular support; namely, that mankind first arose into being in a state of ignorance and barbarism, and that speech and language were afterward and gradually acquired. We have shown that in this case reason and revelation unite to prove, on the contrary, that man was created in the Divine image, in



*knowledge* as well as in holiness ; and that, although a measure of this intellectual power was lost in consequence of the Fall, this could not have reduced Adam below the condition of his most favoured descendants. It is therefore evident, that the earliest generations of mankind were as fully equal to their successors in the attributes of their minds, as they were in the form and physical structure of their bodies. The idiotic barbarism which has been ascribed to the first generations of mankind is as flatly opposed to reason and history, as it is to revelation. And the dignity of primitive human nature is asserted and proved.

5. We have shown that alphabetical characters were in all probability in use from the beginning ; that the traditions of all nations attest it, and that the most ancient records support the conclusion. We have also found corroborating evidence in the repeated allusions to an early literature, which are found in various nations, and proofs of the existence of which meet us in sacred and profane records. We have also seen that indications of the early existence of science are prevalent in all authentic accounts of the first ages, and that these are presented to our view in a manner which strikingly corroborates the scriptural narrative of the Deluge, and which in other respects accords with the entire history of the period.

6. It is an important consideration, that the results of the investigation perfectly harmonize. The chronology casts light upon the state of learning and science, and allows the admission of historic evidence which on any other theory would stand arrayed against it ; while, on the other hand, the whole scope of our inquiries into the literature of the age confirms and establishes the chronology. When inquiries independently conducted produce these harmonious results, it is a circumstance which must greatly strengthen our confidence in the soundness of the principles upon which they have been conducted, and in the conclusions which have been elicited.

With the knowledge thus obtained, and guided by the chronology and estimate of learning which we have now laid



down, we shall proceed to investigate the History and Religion of this interesting period. We beg the reader to apply to every part of these efforts the criteria established in this Preliminary Dissertation, and hope the whole will be calculated to cast some light on an important portion of history.



TABLE No. 3.—SHOWING THE CONTEMPORARY PATRIARCHS

|      |      | ACCORDING TO THE HEBREW. |     |
|------|------|--------------------------|-----|
| A.M. | B.C. | YEAR OF THE DELUGE. .... |     |
| 1656 | 2348 | ...                      | 2   |
| 1756 | 2248 | ...                      | 35  |
| 1856 | 2148 | Noah 350                 | 30  |
| 1956 | 2048 | Shem 502                 | 34  |
| 2056 | 1948 | 500 :<br>Arphaxad 438    | 30  |
| 2156 | 1848 | 403 :<br>Salah 433       | 32  |
| 2256 | 1748 | 403 :<br>Eber 464        | 30  |
|      |      | 430 :<br>Peleg 239       | 29  |
|      |      | 209 :<br>Reu 239         | 70  |
|      |      | 207 :<br>Serug 230       | 100 |
|      |      | 200 :<br>Nahor 148       | 135 |
|      |      | 119 :<br>Terah 205       | 175 |
|      |      | 135 :<br>Abraham 175     | 180 |
|      |      | 75 :<br>Isaac 180        |     |

EXPLANATION.—The dotted lines across both sections of the table mark the successive centuries of this period, each space between the lines representing One Hundred years, beginning with the year of the Deluge, according to the Hebrew, A.M. 1656, by the Septuagint, A.M. 2262. The perpendicular lines, which are connected together, represent the lives of the patriarchs whose names are on the left side of them, the length of the line being proportioned to the number of years the person lived; showing, not only the relative length of the patriarchs' lives, but also the period when each lived. The figures after the name give the entire length of life, except in the case of Noah and Shem: those uppermost to the right of the line give the period before, and those below, the period after, the birth of the succeeding son. For example: According to the Hebrew, Reu was born in the early part of the second century after the Deluge, and died in the latter part of the fourth; he lived 239 years, was thirty-two years old at the birth of Serug, and lived 207 years afterwards. By the Septuagint, the same patriarch was born in the latter part of the seventh century after the Deluge, and died just at the close of the tenth, became the father of Serug at 132, lived 207 years afterwards, and died aged 339 years. By the Hebrew, he was contemporary with all the patriarchs from Noah to Abraham; according to the Septuagint, he was born just before the death of Salah, and died before the birth of Terah.



# IN THE POSTDILUVIAN PERIOD.

## ACCORDING TO THE SEPTUAGINT.

|          |     | YEAR OF THE DELUGE..... | B.C. | A.M. |
|----------|-----|-------------------------|------|------|
| Noah     | 350 | .....                   | 3245 | 2262 |
| Shem     | 502 | .....                   | 3145 | 2362 |
| Arphaxad | 538 | .....                   | 3045 | 2462 |
| Cainan   | 460 | .....                   | 2945 | 2562 |
| Salah    | 433 | .....                   | 2845 | 2662 |
| Eber     | 404 | .....                   | 2745 | 2762 |
| Peleg    | 339 | .....                   | 2645 | 2862 |
| Reu      | 339 | .....                   | 2545 | 2962 |
| Serug    | 330 | .....                   | 2445 | 3062 |
| Nahor    | 148 | .....                   | 2345 | 3162 |
| Terah    | 205 | .....                   | 2245 | 3262 |
| Abraham  | 175 | .....                   | 2145 | 3362 |
| Isaac    | 180 | .....                   | 2045 | 3462 |
|          |     | .....                   | 1945 | 3562 |
|          |     | .....                   | 1845 | 3362 |



REPORTED BY THE CLERK

OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

IN THE YEAR 1840

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

AND SENATE

OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

IN SENATE, FEBRUARY 2, 1840

REPORTED BY THE CLERK



THE  
HISTORY AND RELIGION  
OF  
THE PATRIARCHAL AGE.

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CHAPTER I.

THE CREATION OF THE WORLD, AND OF MAN.

SUBLIMITY and Importance of the Subject—Sources of Information—Scripture the only infallible Guide—Creation associated with Man's moral Probation—Human Theories and Speculations—Epicurus—Diodorus Siculus—Modern Geologists—Question of the Creation of the World in six Days—2 Peter iii. 8—Illustration from the Case of Man—Fossil Remains—MOSAIC NARRATIVE—Gen. i. 1—*First Day*—Proofs in Nature of the Holy Spirit's Agency—Creation and Division of Light—*Second Day*—Creation of the Atmosphere—*Third Day*—Division of Land and Water—Creation of the vegetable Kingdom—*Fourth Day*—Formation of the Sun, Moon, and Stars—*Fifth Day*—Creation of Fishes and Birds—*Sixth Day*—Creation of Animals—and of Man—NOTICES OF CREATION HANDED DOWN BY PROFANE HISTORY—Sanchoniatho, Berosus—Cosmogony of the Hindus—Laws of Menu—The Vedas—Persian Theology—Scandinavian Mythology—Classic Authors of Greece and Rome—Hesiod—Aristophanes—Orpheus—Pythagoras and Plato—Proclus—Ovid—Points of Resemblance common to the above Accounts—Cause of this.

THE attempt to supply any satisfactory account of the creation of the world, and of the primitive condition of mankind, may appear a presumptuous undertaking; and yet, however difficult this task may seem, or hopeless its successful execution, these subjects, it will be readily admitted, are of deep interest and importance. Nothing was ever fabled by poetic imagination, involving conceptions so sublime, and operations so magnificent, as the creation of our world; no developement of intellect, scintillations of genius,



or exhibitions of moral principle in the human character, can be placed in comparison with the spiritual and intellectual state of man when he first came from the hand of his Maker, glorious in the possession of the Divine image, and happy in a pure and perfect fellowship with God.

To these subjects we propose to call the serious attention of the reader; and in doing so, while we take holy scripture for our principal guide, shall avail ourselves of the various means which scientific researches, and the records of profane history, afford for their illustration.

We are anxious at once to observe, that the subjects now to be discussed, immediately and necessarily fix our attention on the almighty power and beneficent purposes of God. We cannot properly contemplate man apart from his religious character and spiritual destiny. We cannot form just ideas of his primitive condition apart from his immediate relation to the Author of his being. Nor can we contemplate the creation of the world on which we live, without distinctly recognising the high moral purposes for which it was called into existence.

This is made more evident by the fact, that not only does the nature of the subject identify itself with the operations of Divine wisdom and power, but the information on which alone we can rely is communicated by Divine revelation. Neither the labours of science, nor the fragments of ancient history which have been preserved to our day, can give us an authentic and consistent idea of creation. In this great work of the Deity, we have a stupendous fact which we never could have known unless it had been revealed. We may construct a system of opinions by the independent exertion of our own minds; we may reason upon appearances, and arrive at conclusions, without being indebted to foreign assistance; but, by *reasoning* we never could discover past facts; in this way no man could ever write a history. He who professes to inform us of what formerly occurred, must relate either what he has seen, or what he has heard; but he must not tell us merely what he thinks. When Jehovah made the earth, and created man



upon it, there were no human witnesses of his power.. Man, therefore, according to these intuitive and unquestionable principles, could not of himself obtain any knowledge of creation. We may reason, and reason plausibly, respecting the formation of the world, or the original circumstances and condition of mankind; but, in this way, it is utterly impossible to discover any thing respecting the facts. For a knowledge of these we are necessarily indebted to foreign information. This information we have in the Bible.

These conclusions are not only sustained by reason, they are also confirmed by experience. The highest efforts of the human mind have been put forth with the most daring energy in speculative researches on this subject, and have utterly failed. The more it has struggled, the more we perceive the feebleness of the human mind and the narrow limits that confine it. If ever a people were placed by Providence in circumstances which warranted the hope that they would evince superhuman powers of understanding, the Greeks were that favoured community. Yet even their gigantic intellectual efforts failed to elicit the elementary truth now under consideration. They were ignorant of creation. They did not perceive the possibility of any other change than one of form, and the giving a new mould to pre-existent materials. This was the plague-spot of their entire philosophy. It was this that shed the withering curse of darkness and superstition over the wide range of their intellectual effort. The truth enunciated in the first verse of the Bible would have emancipated their minds from benighted thralldom, and thus have given spirit and life to the philosophy of the world. The scripture doctrine of creation would have overturned the fundamental errors which corrupted the learning of Greece; and not of Greece only, but of all other countries unenlightened by revelation. Ignorant of this truth, the most profound researches of the greatest minds served only to plunge them into all the subtleties and absurdities of pantheism; the universe was confounded with its Maker: and, imbued with this false principle, the more they reasoned, the deeper they sank



into error; it haunted them on every side, and blinded them to every just notion of God, of nature, and of themselves. Thus it has always been, wherever revelation has been unknown, or its teaching rejected.

But where the scripture doctrine, that "God created the heavens and the earth," is known and received, there the first principle of true philosophy is recognised. Nature is considered, not as a necessary existence, but as the creature of the Almighty; and the laws of nature, not as the unalterable conditions of being, but as the manner in which unchangeable Wisdom operates to confer the highest benefits, and to manifest his preservation and government of the world. "This view gives a totally different aspect to all things, and removes the creature to an infinite distance from the Creator. There is no longer any room for the imaginary universe of the pantheists. Jehovah, the self-existent and all-perfect Being, with the worlds which he created, and which he is ever ruling, alone meets our view. Though intimately present with all his works, he is yet entirely distinct from them. 'In him we live and move and have our being.' He is infinitely nigh to us, and infinitely present with us, while we remain infinitely distant from his all-perfect and incommunicable essence." \*

But holy scripture not only declares that "God created the heavens and the earth;" it also gives us important information respecting events which took place even prior to this creation. We are told that God had previously called into being the several orders of angels, who, ministering to his will, stood in his presence, and were witnesses of his majesty and glory. Of these spiritual intelligences some retained their purity, while others fell from their original estate. These were cast out of heaven, and doomed to degradation and punishment; they employed their powers to counteract the purposes of the Almighty, and to exalt themselves against the Most High. We extend no daring speculation into the mysterious causes of their fall, but simply notice

\* DOUGLAS'S "Errors regarding Religion," p. 35.



the facts which holy scripture has so distinctly revealed. We may, however, presume, that these events influenced the divine purpose in the creation of the world, and greatly affected the future circumstances of mankind. It is certain that the angels took a deep interest in this creation, and in the condition and destiny of human nature. Hence we are told that when God "laid the foundations of the earth, the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy."

These plain and distinct enunciations of revelation must be taken as first principles by every intelligent mind searching after truth, and anxious to be guided by its teaching. It is utterly absurd in a *Christian* to invest the inductions of science, or any other source of knowledge, with an authority superior to that which is awarded to the explicit declarations of holy writ. Two truths cannot contradict each other. If they appear to do so, the appearance must result from the incompetency of the person who endeavours to form a judgment on the subject. Therefore, in considering the origin of the world, although it may be wise not only to hear all that the researches of science have elicited as to the operations of nature in past ages, but even to search after this information with great diligence; it is not wise to be led away by the general influence of these inductions, so as to regard the existence and present condition of the world as the result of a series of natural operations, while the existence of mankind is looked upon as one of the thousand accidents by which it has been affected, their moral and spiritual condition and destiny being entirely left out of the account. This is neither reasonable nor religious. On this subject, we are not to take the book of revelation and the book of science, and reject all the declarations of either which the other does not confirm. They are two separate and independent teachers, which, when fairly used and fully understood, cannot contradict each other; while each may, and is intended to, communicate information respecting which the other is entirely silent.



If we pursue this course, it will appear that revealed truth, lit up with the prescience of Jehovah, discloses hidden things, and, penetrating regions which the eye of science never reached, and never can reach, it unveils the counsels of the Almighty, and displays his plans and purposes respecting man. Here we learn that God, having called into being spirits richly endowed with blessings, and partakers of his glory in the heavenly world,—having marked and punished the apostasy of a part of this angelic host,—had contemplated the creation of man. This creation led to the system of vicarious sacrifice, and the entire scheme of redemption. Hence revelation exhibits Christ as “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,” and speaks of the “purpose and grace” of God, as “given us before the world began.” To all, therefore, who will take the book of revelation to inform their minds and guide their judgment respecting spiritual things, as they take the book of science to teach them earthly things, the moral probation of man, in connexion with his religious privileges and future destiny, will appear as the great object of this remarkable display of divine wisdom and power; and this earth, with its elaborate scheme of construction, and its beautiful and varied furniture, is presented to our minds only as the platform on which this grand moral experiment was to take place.

We propound these views pointedly and prominently, because we regard them as essential to a correct apprehension of the subject. We are aware that to some persons they will appear forced and strange: still we adhere to our purpose. We write for those who revere the scriptures, and who, while anxious to receive all the knowledge which science has disclosed, are no less, nay, are yet more, anxious to derive instruction from the inspired records of revealed truth. To all such it will be manifest that religion is indigenous to our earth; that the world was formed for it; and that, consequently, neither the origin of mankind, the place of their residence, nor the government and preservation of both, can be rightly considered, with-



out a steady and constant recognition of this fundamental principle.

Although the religion of man is the great subject of the Bible, it nevertheless opens with a narrative of the creation of the world. On the account furnished in the beginning of the Book of Genesis we shall have to remark at some length; but as it will be necessary to give an outline of what the human intellect has conjectured on this subject, as well as what profane history has handed down to us, we will first enter upon this part of our work.

It may be necessary to make this preliminary remark, that those writers who first treated of creation, contented themselves with giving an outline of facts which agreed in their leading particulars with the Mosaic narrative, although more or less obscured and confused by traditionary additions and interpolations. These accounts, in process of time, called forth ingenious reasonings on the creative process, until the daring mind of man, rejecting the restraint of facts, having acquired through them some little knowledge of the subject, began to imagine that it could suggest a more satisfactory method of the formation of the world, than that which had been handed down by the consenting voice of antiquity.

Epicurus was the great leader in this path of speculation; and his example has been followed by numerous philosophers, from his time down to the geological theorists of our own day.

This philosopher affirmed that "atoms of an infinite smallness, and in perpetual motion, compose the universe; and, falling by chance into the region of our world, were, in consequence of the innate motion, brought gradually together, and collected into an indigested mass. These atoms, according to their size and weight, either subsided and settled into earth, or formed themselves into air, or collected themselves into stars; and hence arose the material globe; while the vegetable and animal productions of the earth sprung from various seeds intermixed with the first combination of atoms, and, being preserved and nourished



by moisture and heat, afterwards grew up into organized bodies of various kinds." \*

On this absurd scheme, an eminently learned writer justly observes: "Certain it is, what Dr. Clarke conjectures in his dispute with Leibnitz, that Epicurus's philosophy was a corrupt and atheistical perversion of some more ancient, and perhaps better, philosophy." †

We may see another version of this theory, varying in some particulars, and more extended, in the Historical Library of Diodorus Siculus.

He says: "Of the origin, therefore, of men, there are two opinions amongst the most famous and authentic naturalists and historians.

"Some of these are of opinion, that the world had neither a beginning, nor ever shall have an end; and likewise say, that mankind was from eternity, and that there never was a time when he first began to be. Others, on the contrary, conceived both the world to be made, and to be corruptible, and that there was a certain time when men first had a being.

"For, whereas all things at the first were jumbled together, heaven and earth were in one mass, and had one and the same form: but afterwards, they say, when corporeal beings appeared one after another, the world at length presented itself in the order we now see; and that the air was in continual agitation, whose fiery part ascended together to the highest place, its nature, by reason of its levity, tending always upwards; for which reason, both the sun and that vast number of the stars are contained within that orb. That the gross and earthy matter, clotted together by moisture, by reason of its weight sunk down below into one place, is continually whirling about; the sea was made of the humid parts; and the muddy earth of the more solid, as yet very moorish and soft; which by degrees at first was made crusty by the heat of the sun; and then after the

\* See SUMNER'S "Records of Creation," p. 20.

† WARBURTON'S "Divine Legation of Moses demonstrated," vol. i. p. 622.



face of the earth was parched, and, as it were, fermented, the moisture afterwards in many places bubbled up, and appeared as so many pustules wrapt up in thin and slender coats and skins which may be ever seen in standing ponds and marshy places, when, after the earth has been pierced with cold, the air grows hot, without a gradual alteration. And whereas moisture generates creatures from heat, as from a seminal principle, things so generated, by being inwrapt in the dewy mists of the night, grew and increased, and in the day solidated and were made hard by the heat of the sun ; and when the births included in those ventricles had received their due proportion, then those slender skins being burst asunder by the heat, the forms of all sorts of living creatures were brought forth into the light ; of which those that had most of heat mounted aloft, and were fowl and birds of the air ; but those that were drossy and had more of earth, were numbered in the order of creeping things, and things used to the earth. Then those beasts that were naturally watery and moist, called ‘fishes,’ presently hastened to the place connatural to them ; and when the earth afterward became more dry and solid by the heat of the sun and the drying winds, it had not power at length to produce any more of the greater living creatures, but each that had an animal life began to increase their kind by mutual copulation.

“ But if this power of the earth to produce living creatures at the first origin of all things seem incredible to any, the Egyptians do bring testimonies of this energy of the earth about Thebes in Egypt, after the overflowing of the river Nile : the earth thereby being covered with mud and slime, many places putrefy through the heat of the sun, and thence are bred multitudes of mice. It is certain, therefore, that out of the earth, when it is hardened, and the air changed from its due and natural temperament, animals are generated. By which means it came to pass, that in the first beginning of all things, various living creatures proceeded from the earth. And these are the opinions touching the original of things.



“The Egyptians report, that, at the beginning of the world, the first men were created in Egypt.....And that all living creatures were first produced among them, they use this argument,—that even at this day, about Thebes, at certain times such vast multitudes of mice are bred, that it causes admiration to the beholders. Some of which to the breast and fore feet are animated and begin to move, and the rest of the body (which yet retains the nature of the soil) appears without form. Whence it is manifest, that, in the beginning of the world, through the fertility of the soil, the first men were formed in Egypt.”

Such are the views which the genius and learning of Egypt, Greece, and Rome elicited and promulged with respect to creation. It will be at once admitted, that they are foolish,—utterly ridiculous. The cause is equally manifest: Their philosophy excluded the miraculous agency of an almighty God. They referred the origin of all existing things to the operation of natural causes. Their practical atheism led to the darkness, confusion, and foolishness of their philosophy; and the same cause will always produce the same results. The great elementary truth propounded in the first chapter of Genesis is this,—that “God created the heavens and the earth.” In studying this subject, therefore, we have to trace the footsteps and mark the handy-work of an almighty and infinite Being. It does not follow from this, that we are to close our eyes to the revelations of natural science, or to disregard the many geological facts which have been laboriously collected for our instruction; but the important truth referred to renders it incumbent upon us to bear constantly in mind, that the subject does not exhibit the continuous phenomena of a fully-formed world, but the operations of almighty power in creation.

It is more than ever necessary to attend to this principle at the present time, when so many proficients in geological science parade their discoveries, and maintain that they clearly contradict the Mosaic account of creation. We are indeed fully assured, that in this assertion more is stated



than the circumstances warrant. We do not believe either that the well-ascertained facts of geology contradict the narrative of Moses, or that the scripture account impugns the validity of those facts. The true state of the case appears to be this,—that the theories which have been built on those facts have come into collision with the meaning which certain theologians and philologists have given to the language of Moses. He would be a bold man who should declare that the word of God is contradicted by the works of God. While, therefore, great care should be taken, lest we limit and restrict the meaning of scripture beyond what is reasonable and just, it is equally important that we do not rashly theorize on imperfect data. Above all, we should avoid excluding God from the very actions which, he has distinctly told us, he himself performed.

Some geologists tell us, that the creation of the world in six days is incompatible with the facts which the surface of our globe every where presents to our view. We will not further allude to those who, boldly laying aside all scruple, sacrifice the verity of scripture to the teaching of rocks ; but we will refer for a moment to attempts which are made to reconcile this discordancy. Those days, we are told, could not be ordinary days, but must be taken to mean very long periods of time ; and scripture has been frequently quoted in favour of this mode of interpretation : “ One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” (2 Peter iii. 8.) The inference intended is, that therefore what is said to have been done in one day might have occupied a thousand years. We think this text has a very pertinent application to the subject ; but in our judgment its meaning is the opposite of that which the inference just mentioned would put upon the language. What was the object of the apostle ? Simply this : He had alluded to the prediction of the end of the world, and a final judgment, and to the fact that, as men saw no “ signs of ” the Lord’s “ coming,” they had begun to doubt the truth of these statements : and the apostle, to remove their doubts, and to sustain the authority of holy writ,



says, "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day ;" evidently intending to teach, that, although the things spoken of might be sufficient, in the estimation of man, to occupy a thousand years, the Lord could accomplish all in one day. Apply this to the subject before us. Does it teach that the day in which the Lord worked must have been a thousand years long, for him to have effected his purpose? Is not this opposed to the apostle's scope and intention, and therefore a flagrant perversion of his meaning? And does not this text, therefore, in its true intent and legitimate application, teach, that although, in the judgment of man, the works of creation might require a thousand years for their accomplishment, yet, as it was the Lord's work, one day with him is as a thousand years, and therefore sufficient for the accomplishment of his great designs?

We are anxious to fix attention on this point, before we proceed to consider in detail the Mosaic narrative. We take a simple illustration. When Adam came from the hands of his Maker, it is evident he was fully formed ; as complete in his stature and strength, as in the development of his intellectual powers. If it were possible that the first man, in all the glow of his instantaneous maturity, could now be submitted to our investigation, guided by our experience of the ordinary and universal operations of nature, we should say, that twenty, thirty, or forty years must have been required to bring him to this state of perfection. Yet no one ever imagines that he crept through the progressive stages of infancy and youth ; all admit that the power of God fashioned and perfected him in one day, and presented him to nature as its earthly lord. We are not puzzled with this case, because the body of the first man is removed from our sight : but it is not so with the "everlasting rocks,"—they remain open to our inspection ; and as there is no reason for believing that, in respect of them, as well as in the case of animated nature, the Creator did not at once bring into perfect being, by the word of his power, what in the ordinary operations of nature it would have required



ages to concrete, so there is no reason for demanding, on this account, so extended an era for the works of creation.

We are aware that this does not meet all the difficulties of the case ; for the various series of fossil remains which have been discovered, are sufficient to perplex the most accurate observer. Still we are fully persuaded, that if the power of Almighty God be always recognised, as it should be by every believer in revelation, by far the greater portion of these difficulties will vanish, while a more perfect knowledge of the structure of our earth will gradually dissipate the remainder.

We now proceed to consider the particulars of the Mosaic narrative.

The first truth enunciated is this : “ In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth ; ” and it is added : “ The earth was without form and void ; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.” (Gen. i. 1, 2.)

We have already said that this passage communicates the important information, that not only the form, but the material of which the universe is composed, was created by God,—that it was made out of nothing.

This, although opposed to the judgment of several eminent critics, appears to be the evident meaning of the language we have quoted. It has indeed been contended, that the Hebrew term **ברא** which our translators have rendered “ created,” does not necessarily mean to bring the substance of a thing into being, it being sometimes used to describe the formation of a thing out of pre-existent materials ; indeed, that it is applied indifferently to the one case or the other, and that its meaning in this respect is to be ascertained by the context, and the scope and intention of the writer. We believe this is correct, and that on these principles the doctrine we have stated may be proved to arise out of this text. In the first place, the passage speaks of “ the beginning,” the first act of God’s creative power, at least in respect of this world. Unless, therefore, we admit the eternity of matter, we must admit that this passage speaks of



its creation. Again: admitting that the word rendered "created" may sometimes mean the having formed or fashioned a thing out of pre-existing materials, it is plain, it cannot mean this in the text under consideration; for, as if to guard against this misapprehension, it is immediately added, "The earth was without form and void;" an undoubted proof that the act referred to cannot be understood to mean the giving a new form to existing matter, and must therefore refer to the creation of the matter itself.

On this point, however, we are not left to the uncertainties of verbal criticism. An inspired apostle has made this doctrine an article of faith. He assures us "that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." (Heb. xi. 3.) This settles the point. It proves that the world was made, in respect of its substance as well as its form, immediately by God. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

"And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep." "The few first words of Genesis" are appealed to by geologists, "as containing a brief statement of the creation of the material elements," at a time distinctly preceding the operations of the first day: because "it is nowhere affirmed that God created the heaven and the earth in the *first day*, but in the *beginning*," and it is contended, therefore, that "this beginning may have been an epoch at an unmeasured distance, followed by periods of undefined duration, during which all the physical operations of geology were going on."\*

If putting this sense on the narrative be sufficient to satisfy the demands of geology, there cannot be the slightest reason for presuming that the science is directly opposed to the teaching of revelation. For the brief account of Moses certainly does not say that this creation took place on the first day; and therefore, if it is really necessary, we do not see why this concession may not be made, without at all impugning the verity of holy writ. Yet we are by no means satisfied, either that the discoveries of geology at

\* DR. BUCKLAND'S "Bridgewater Treatise," vol. i. p. 21.



present establish a system of facts which necessarily demand this interpretation, or that it is the natural sense of the words. The terms, "the beginning," are thus in their application thrown back into eternity; their connexion with the subject of the Mosaic narrative, if not cut off, is made distant and indirect; and therefore, at present, we will not presume to dogmatize on the subject, but take the language as distinctly teaching the creation of the matter of which our earth is composed, without at all determining the chronology of this great event.

*First Day.*—"And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day." (Gen. i. 2—5.)

On the first clause of this passage, we observe, that it confirms and extends the truth stated in the first verse, and impressively teaches the immediate agency of the Spirit of God in the formation of the world. The matter had been previously created; but now infinite Wisdom and infinite Power unite in working up these materials into the structure of our earth. We have evidences of this on every side: "Every thing we see, feel, or handle, is a composition, a mixture or union, of more particles or of more elements than one. Not merely the grosser earthly bodies are so, but even the water, the air, and the light are in this compounded state. Now it is impossible that any compound can have been eternally a compound. Composition and eternity are as incompatible as *to be* and *not to be*. The particles of which compounds consist, must have been in some other state, before they were compounded together. The single condition of the elements must have preceded their union in the composition; and thus it is physically impossible that a compound can have been eternal."\*

But by what means were those varying compounds formed? Here is a miracle perhaps no less striking than the creation

\* TURNER'S "Sacred History of the World," vol. i. p. 12.



of matter. How is it accounted for? By the simple terms of this passage of revealed truth. The Spirit of God came down on this inert mass of material elements, and moved upon it; the omnipotent power of God, guided and directed by his infinite wisdom, operated on this chaos of particles, and designed and effected all the combinations and arrangements of them, which the human intellect in its happiest efforts can but partially know,—can do little more than guess at.

But it may be asked, “Has this writer never heard of the laws of nature which have most evidently conduced to the present state of material being? Has he never considered the effects of gravity, concretion, chemical affinity, magnetism, electricity, and various other natural agencies which are now, and have from the beginning been, in operation?” Yes; he has carefully considered all these, and asks in return, Whence did they arise? Are they not all indubitable witnesses of the truth of this text? Do they not all attest the agency of the Spirit of God in creation? Let science display all the wonders of nature, let her testimony be implicitly received; but let the truth of revelation be at the same time granted, and we are necessarily conducted to this important conclusion, that the mysterious agencies which have been referred to, with all that are usually called “the laws of nature,” are but records of what the Holy Ghost, in the beginning, imprinted on the passive elements of matter. And if the human mind faints in the attempt to follow these in their ordinary operation, need we wonder that we cannot unravel the mysteries which they produced when called into the most energetic action by the word of His power, when instinct with the omnipotent energy of the Spirit of God? Yet how wonderful is the fact, that, so far as the researches of physical science extend, it appears that the means which the wisdom and power of Jehovah employed in building up our world, are left by him as the great conservative principles of this terrestrial fabric; and through these natural laws and agencies nature proclaims, in all her works, the being, the wisdom, and the power of God!



The next important point in the narrative which demands attention, is the creation of light, and its alternation with darkness. We will not dwell on the simple, but intensely sublime, language in which this fact is announced. "Darkness was upon the face of the deep. And God said, Light be : and light was." (Gen. i. 2, 3.) There have not been wanting men who would persuade us that, as Moses wrote at a time when the physical sciences were unknown, we must regard his language with the greatest kindness and consideration : as if God who made the world could not teach his servant to give a proper account of its origin ! This passage, of itself, justly exposes all such ridiculous assumption. Moses here speaks of the creation of light as being antecedent to the existence of the sun. For many ages after he wrote, the possibility of this was unknown to the philosophy of this world, although now it is recognised and believed.

"And God divided the light from the darkness." (Gen. i. 4.) We do not know how this could have been done but by means of the diurnal rotation of the earth ; and it does not appear improbable that, from this event, *time* began. The darkness previously existed. God created the light. And to divide the light from the darkness, and to afford this world a rotation of day and night, the daily revolution of the earth was given to it : "And the evening and the morning were the first day." (Verse 5.)

*Second Day.*—"And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament. And the evening and the morning were the second day." (Gen. i. 6—8.)

In this passage we have only the subject of the firmament calling for particular notice. Respecting this, much misconception has prevailed. The meaning of Moses is evident. The term signifies "an expanse," any thing stretched or spread out ; and with peculiar force and propriety applies to the atmosphere which is spread over our earth, and encompasses it as a garment. Light had been called into being,



and now air succeeds as the next essential material in the garniture of the earth.

It is important to observe the special purpose which this atmosphere is here said to be appointed to serve: "to divide the waters from the waters." The account appears to teach, that, at first, the whole earth was encompassed with water, and that, when the atmosphere was created, a portion of the water was taken up and suspended on it. The portion so raised and suspended must have been very large, to justify the language of the text. It is, we know, generally supposed that but a small quantity of water, comparatively, is sustained in aqueous vapour in the air; but whatever may be the quantity so sustained now, we are not aware that any reason exists which would prevent us from believing that a very large proportion of the waters of the ocean might be raised and suspended in the atmosphere without the violation of any natural law.

*Third Day.*—"And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good. And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the third day." (Gen. i. 9—13.)

The first operation of this day was to constitute this world a terraqueous globe, by gathering the waters together, and bringing the dry land into appearance. So far as our knowledge extends, the only way in which this could have been done was to cause some parts of the solid surface of the earth to sink, and the others to become elevated, and thus to form a natural receptacle for the waters. It seems extremely probable that this actually took place, not merely from the appearance of the earth, but also



from the general tenor of the language employed. After a part of the waters had been placed above the firmament, we are not told that the quantity which remained was either increased or diminished : they were simply “gathered together.”

After this, we have the creation of the vegetable kingdom. This was a grand manifestation of Divine Power. The creation of vegetables was the formation of living organized beings, with spontaneous internal powers, but without locomotion. We will not dwell on their endless variety, their exquisite beauty, or the astonishing adaptation and design so strikingly apparent in every part of this creation ; although each of these presents an inviting subject of inquiry. We therefore simply observe, Moses does not tell us that God spoke trees, shrubs, and flowers into existence, as he did the light and the air : he caused them to grow. He said, “Let the earth *bring forth* grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth.” (Verse 11.) We have here a striking illustration of the sentiment advanced in a preceding page. The vegetable kingdom was called into being as vegetables *now* rise into being : they grew out of the earth. “And it was so.” The grass, the herbs, the trees, grew in one day ; they rose up into such perfect being, that God saw that it was good. If this does not teach that results which now, in the ordinary operations of nature, require a considerable time for their production, were then, by the power of God, produced in the same manner, but in the short space of a day, we candidly confess we can attach no meaning to the language.

*Fourth Day.*—“And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night ; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years : and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth : and it was so. And God made two great lights ; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night : he made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the hea-



ven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness : and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day." (Verses 14—19.)

Moses has already informed us, that light was created on the first day ; and here he teaches, that the sun and moon were formed on the fourth. This has been urged as one of the most serious objections to the scripture narrative, on the supposition that the sun, being the fountain of light, must have been created before light could exist. Such, for ages, was the commonly-received opinion. But now "no truth in philosophy seems to be more clearly ascertained, than that light has a distinct existence, separate and independent of the sun."\* The progress of philosophical knowledge has, in this particular, fully justified the Mosaic account. This circumstance is very important. The sacred historian is frequently represented as having written according to the external appearance of physical objects ; and it is therefore supposed that, as we obtain a more correct knowledge of natural science, his language will be found to some extent inapplicable to the true state of things. But what is the fact, in the case before us ? According to appearance, light emanates from the sun. The idea of the existence of light independent of the sun, could never have been popular. Yet we find Moses speaking of this separate existence, and declaring that light was created three days before the sun. How is this to be accounted for ? What does it involve ? Undoubtedly, that Moses wrote under the influence of that knowledge which was intimately acquainted with the origin and constitution of all physical being ; and that, therefore, any apparent discrepancy between the scripture account, and the discoveries of science, instead of reflecting discredit upon the former, ought rather to teach us that in those respects our philosophical knowledge is imperfect,—that, as yet, we have not hit upon the true key to natural phenomena.

\* SHARON TURNER'S "Sacred History," vol. i. p. 91.



It is an interesting circumstance, that Moses so distinctly alludes to the effect of the motions and influence of these heavenly bodies in regulating the division of time. This purpose they have served by regulating days and seasons, as well as by affording every observer the means of marking, measuring, and counting the progress of that portion of eternity during which this universe is permitted to exist.

*Fifth Day.*—“And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.” (Gen. i. 20—23.)

How grand, yet how beautiful, are the developements of creative wisdom and power! We have seen the structure of our earth built up by the *fiat* of God; its rocks and hills compounded and arranged by his power, the fluid waters laving the shores beneath, and a transparent atmosphere encompassing all above. The vegetable kingdom rises into being, displaying an entirely new feature of the Divine procedure. Before this, matter had indeed been not only created, but also variously arranged and compounded; yet, hitherto, this had only amounted to an aggregation of separable parts and particles. In vegetable nature, we have more than this; we have organization accompanied with what is properly called life. A stone and a tree may both increase in size; but it is in a very different way, and through the operation of entirely opposite principles. The former increases by the aggregation of suitable material to its external surface; the latter, by the living action of an internal organization. We have now to contemplate a further progress in creation: we find in animal nature not only organized living being, but this connected with sentient powers



and locomotion. Without venturing upon the nice and difficult question of animal mind, we may observe a very important quality of it,—it is one and indivisible. *This life* cannot be divided. If you take off the limb of a sentient creature, though you make it to become a separate part, you carry no feeling with it. The entire life and feeling remain in the maimed animal, and the separated part becomes devoid of feeling and life.

The fishes and fowls, in all their varieties, were the products of this day's creation.

*The Sixth Day.*—"And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good." (Gen. i. 24, 25.)

On this day all *terrestrial* animals were created. In the first instance this seems but a continuation of the fifth day's work, until it is crowned with the creation of the first human pair. The narrative proceeds, stating the facts in consecutive order, until, having noticed all the several particulars, Moses, in verse 26, returns to the subject, and gives a more extended account of the origin of that order of beings who were to be the subjects of very special consideration from their Divine Author, and for whose benefit the sacred narrative was given.

The terms in which the Divine purpose in the creation of man was declared, are very remarkable. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." (Verse 26.)

"It was a superb destiny that man should be appointed to be the image and likeness of God, and this great truth is not left to be elicited inferentially: it is expressly revealed, and stands out in the Old and New Testament scriptures as



the important fact and principle of their inspired communications.

“He has therefore made our intelligent spirit in such a likeness to his own, that there can be intercourse and communion, and sympathy, affection, and affinity between man and his God. His sacred mind can at all times, from this similarity, make himself intelligible to us, and perceptible by us. He can at all times impress our sensibilities, and communicate his influences. We are essentially His image and likeness in our original nature and capacities; and the more steadily and successfully we advance to all the attainable perfections of our being, the more complete the actual assimilation will become.”\*

We have also special information respecting the origin of woman. This exhibits the result of one of the most beautiful and interesting, as well as most benevolent, ideas of the Divine Mind. Of man, even when existing in all his pristine perfection, the all-wise Creator said, “It is not good that the man should be alone.” (Gen. ii. 18.) And the infinite attributes of Jehovah were called into exercise to supply this want by providing him a “help meet.” In the creation of woman this object was secured in the most perfect manner. “And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.” (Gen. i. 31.)

“And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it.” (Gen. ii. 3.) It is thus that the sacred narrative of the creation closes. After exhibiting the progressive origin of all earthly things and earthly creatures, the Almighty marks out the seventh day by a sacred ordinance, claiming it specially for his own, investing it with a peculiar sanctity; as if, even during the time of human innocence, it was necessary repeatedly to bring to mind the Divine origin of created things, and specially man’s relation to and connexion with God.

We now direct attention to a few of those notices of creation which profane history has, in various detached

\* TURNER’S “Sacred History,” vol. i. p. 537.



fragments, handed down to us. We consider them valuable as exhibiting striking evidence that the leading facts of the Mosaic narrative were generally known in the early ages of the world; and also as showing the gradual, but extensive, manner in which primitive tradition was corrupted, until at length it became lost in a mass of poetry and fable.

The first writer to whom we refer is Sanchoniatho. He is supposed to have lived before the Trojan war. His writings are the oldest that have come down to us, with the exception of the holy scriptures. He wrote a treatise respecting the theology and antiquities of Phenicia; of this only a few fragments remain. That which we now quote is the account which Eusebius has preserved of Sanchoniatho's cosmogonic system.\*

“He supposes that the beginning of all things was a dark and condensed windy air, or a breeze of thick air, and a chaos turbid and black of Erebus; and that these were unbounded, and for a long series of ages destitute of form. But when this wind became enamoured of its own first principles, (the chaos,) and an intimate union took place, that connexion was called Pothos;† and it was the beginning of the creation of all things. And it (the chaos) knew not its own production; but from its embrace with the wind was generated Môt; which some call Ilus, (mud,) but others the putrefaction of a watery mixture. And from this sprung all the seed of the creation, and the generation of the universe.

“And there were certain animals without sensation, from which intelligent animals were produced; and these were called Zophasemin, that is, the overseers of the heavens; and they were formed in the shape of an egg: and from Môt shone forth the sun and the moon and the less and the greater stars.

\* *Præpar. Evangel.* lib. i. cap. 10.

† “This union, among the Heathens, and particularly among the Phenicians, was symbolized by an egg enfolded by a serpent, which *disjunctively* represented the chaos and the ether, but, when united, the hermaphroditic first principle of the universe, Cupid, or Pothos.”



“And when the air began to send forth light, by its fiery influence on the sea and earth, winds were produced, and clouds, and very great defluxions and torrents of the heavenly waters.” After this our author proceeds to say: “These things were found written in the Cosmogony of Taautus, and in his Commentaries, and were drawn from his observations and the natural signs which by his penetration he perceived and discovered, and with which he has enlightened us.”

He further states: “Of the wind Colpias, and his wife Baau, which is interpreted night, were begotten two mortal men, Æon and Protogonus, so called: and Æon discovered food from trees.”

It is remarkable that this account is said to have been obtained from the records of Taautus; and, according to this same author, Taautus was the son of Misraim, the son of Ham, who first occupied and peopled Egypt after the Flood. Eusebius says that “he took the greatest pains in searching the records of Taautus, but some later writers had corrupted his remains by their allegorical interpretations and physical additions: for, says Philo, the more modern priests or explainers of the *Sacra* had omitted to relate the true facts as they were recorded, instead of which they had obscured them by invented accounts and mysterious fictions, drawn from their notions of the nature of the universe; so that it was not easy for one to distinguish the real facts which Taautus had recorded from the fictions superadded to them. But he, (that is, Sanchoniatho,) finding some of the books of the Ammonæi, which were kept in the libraries or registries of the temples, examined every thing with the greatest care, and, rejecting the allegories and fables which at first sight offered themselves, he at length brought his work to perfection. But the priests that lived after him, adding their comments and explications to his work, brought all back to mythology again.”\*

There can be little doubt that this has been the fate alike of history and theology in Heathen nations: facts and doc-

\* EUSEB. *Præp. Evang.* lib. i. cap. 9, *ad fin.*



trines have been so obscured by fiction and fable, that, although when we have an authentic record we may be able to detect in the corrupted picture an outline of truth, still it must be evident that those who had no other guide could not have any correct apprehension of certain fact or sound doctrine.

This is precisely the case with the extract just given from the Phenician historian. We have here the chaos of Moses buried in the darkness of night; the waters, their action and separation from the earth; the sun, moon, and stars; the creation of a first human pair. Hence we find Porphyry arguing in favour of his agreement with Moses, and Philo Biblius, Eusebius, Pliny, Curtius, and Lucan, supporting the credibility of his history.

We next adduce the account of the origin of all things furnished by Berosus. He wrote from records preserved in the temple of Belus at Babylon.

“There was a time,” he says, “in which there existed nothing but darkness and an abyss of waters, wherein resided most hideous beings which were produced of a two-fold principle.” After describing several monstrous shapes, and observing “that of all these were preserved delineations in the temple of Belus at Babylon,” he proceeds: “The person who presided over them was a woman named Omoroca; which in the Chaldean language is Thalath, in Greek Thalassa, ‘the Sea;’ but which might equally be interpreted ‘the Moon.’ All things being in this situation, Belus came and cut the woman asunder; and of one half of her he formed the earth, and of the other half the heavens; and at the same time destroyed the animals within her, or, in the abyss. All this,” he says, “was an allegorical description of nature. For the whole universe, consisting of moisture, and animals being continually generated therein, the deity above-mentioned took off his own head: upon which the other gods mixed the blood as it gushed out with the earth; and from thence were formed men. On this account it is that they are rational, and partake of divine knowledge. This Belus, by whom they signify Jupiter, divided the dark-



ness, and separated the heavens from the earth, and reduced the universe to order. But the animals, not being able to bear the light, died. Belus upon this, seeing a vast space unoccupied, though by nature fruitful, commanded one of the gods to take off his head, and to mix the blood with the earth; and from thence to form other men and animals, which should be capable of bearing the air (light). Belus formed also the stars, and the sun, and the moon, and the five planets.”\*

The cosmogony of the Hindus is equally striking, and affords similar points of coincidence with the Mosaic narrative.

This information is obtained from various sources, many of the ancient sacred writings of the Hindus affording references to this subject. From the “Laws of Menu,” one of the oldest oriental records, we extract the following:—

“The universe existed only in the first divine idea yet unexpanded, as if involved in darkness, imperceptible, undefinable, undiscoverable by reason, and undiscovered by revelation, as if it were wholly immersed in sleep.” (Chap. i. 5.)

“Then the sole self-existing Power, himself undiscerned, but making this world discernible, with five elements and other principles of nature, appeared with undiminished glory, expanding his idea, or dispelling the gloom.” (Chap. i. 6.)

“He whom the mind alone can perceive, whose essence eludes the external organs, who has no visible parts, who exists from eternity;—even He, the soul of all beings, whom no being can comprehend, shone forth in person.” (Chap. i. 7.)

“He, having willed to produce various beings from his own divine substance, first with a thought created the waters.” (Chap. i. 8.)

“The waters are called *nárá* because they are the production of NARA, or ‘*the Spirit of God* ;’ and, since they were his first *ayana*, or ‘place of motion,’ he thence is named *Nárá yana*, or, ‘moving on the waters.’” (Chap. i. 10.)

\* CORY’S “Fragments,” p. 26.



“From THAT WHICH IS, the first cause, not the object of sense, existing *every where in substance*, not existing to our perception, without beginning or end, was produced the divine male.” (Chap i. 11.)

“He framed the heaven *above*, and the earth *beneath* : in the midst he placed the subtle ether, the eight regions, and the permanent receptacle of waters.” (Chap. i. 13.)

“He framed all creatures.” (Chap. i. 16.)

“He too first assigned to all creatures distinct names, distinct acts, and distinct occupations.” (Chap. i. 21.)

“He gave birth to time and the divisions of time ; to the stars also, and to the planets ; to rivers, oceans, and mountains, to level plains and uneven valleys.” (Chap. i. 24.)

“Having divided his own substance, the mighty power became half male and half female.” (Chap. i. 32.)

The accordance which exists between the general tenor of these passages and the scripture account, is rendered still more remarkable by the following text from the Vedas, which is selected for special use in devotional exercises :—

“The Supreme Being alone existed ; afterwards, there was a universal darkness ; next, the watery ocean was produced, by the diffusion of virtue ; then did the Creator-Lord of the universe rise out of the ocean, and successively framed the sun and moon, which govern day and night, whence proceed the revolutions of years ; and after them he framed heaven and earth, the space between, and the celestial regions.”\*

It is not so easy to select passages capable of conveying an intelligible account of the opinions held by the ancient Persians, although the records of no people contain matters of deeper interest.

Their system of theology begins by declaring the existence of a great first principle which it calls Zerwan, a term which is understood to mean “Time,”—time without beginning and without end. This incomprehensible Being is author of the two great active powers of the universe—Ormuzd the principle of all good, and Ahriman the prin-

\* “Asiatic Researches,” vol. v. p. 361.



ciple of all evil. This latter being, although frequently spoken of as having been always essentially evil, is at other times referred to as having been originally a pure and holy spirit, who had fallen into sin, and thus become evil.

These independent powers are represented as being actively opposed to each other. Ormuzd created pure spirits or angels; Ahriman meets this by the creation of equally active and powerful spiritual agents.

Afterward the god Ormuzd created the world, not indeed in six days, but, what is very similar to it, at six different intervals. Each of these periods comprehended a considerable number of days, though not an equal one, yet, in the sum total, the six times amounted exactly to a whole year. During the first period were created the heavens; during the second, the waters. The third was allotted to the production of the earth; the fourth, to the formation of trees and vegetables. During the fifth, the various tribes of animals, ærial, sylvan, and aquatic, received their existence; and the sixth space of time, in almost exact conformity with the sixth day of the Mosaical cosmogony, was devoted solely to the creation of man. This was the most honourable of all the productions of Ormuzd.\*

We now proceed to notice the allusions to this subject which are found amongst the ancient remains of the Gothic or Scandinavian mythology. In the Edda, and other old works of this class, we have the following information:—

“At the beginning of time,” (so it is said in the poem of the Voluspa,) “when nothing was yet formed, neither shore nor sea nor foundations beneath; the earth was nowhere to be found below, nor the heaven above: all was one vast abyss, without plant or verdure. Yet, before all things, there existed what we call *Muspelsheim*. It is a world luminous, glowing, not to be dwelt in by strangers, and situate at the extremity of the earth. Surtur holds his empire there. In his hand there shines a flaming sword. He shall come at the end of the world; he shall vanquish

\* FABER'S “Origin of Pagan Idolatry,” vol. i. p. 232; FRASER'S “History of Persia,” pp. 150—153.



all the gods; he shall give up the universe a prey to the flames.

“But what was the state of the world, before there were families of men upon the earth, and before the nations were formed?

“The rivers, called Elivages, flowed so far from their sources, that the venom which they rolled along became hard, like the scoria of a furnace when it grows cold. Hence was formed the ice; which stopped and flowed no more. Then all the venom that was beginning to cover it, also became frozen: and thus many strata of congealed vapours were formed one above another, in the vast abyss. By this means that part of the abyss which lies toward the north, was filled with a mass of gelid vapours and ice; whilst the interior parts of it were replete with whirlwinds and tempests.

“A breath of heat spreading itself over the gelid vapours, they melted into drops; and of these drops was formed a man, by the power of him who governed. This man was named Ymer, the giants call him Amgelmer. From him are descended all the families of the giants. He was wicked, as were all his posterity. Whilst he slept, he fell into a sweat; and from the pit of his left arm were born a male and a female. One of his feet begot upon the other a son, from whom is descended the race of the giants. Immediately after this breath from the south had melted the gelid vapours, and resolved them into drops, there was formed out of them a cow named Oedumla. From her there sprung a man, who was endowed with beauty, agility, and power. He was called Bure, and was the father of Bore, who married Beyzla, the daughter of the giant Baldorn. Of that marriage were born three sons, Odin, Vile, and Ve: and it is our belief, that this Odin with his brothers ruleth both heaven and earth, and Odin is his true name; and that he is the most powerful of the gods.

“Was there any kind of equality, or any degree of good understanding, between those two different races?

“Far from it: the sons of Bore slew the giant Ymer;



and there ran so much blood from his wounds, that all the families of the giants of the frost were drowned in it, except one single giant, who saved himself with all his household. He is called Bergelmer. He escaped by happening to be aboard his bark; and in him was preserved the race of the giants of the frost. This is confirmed by the following verses: 'Many winters before the earth was fashioned, was Bergelmer born; and well I know, that this sage giant was saved and preserved on board his bark.'

"What then became of the sons of Bore?"

"They dragged the body of Ymer into the middle of the abyss, and of it formed the earth. The water and the sea were composed of his blood; the mountains of his bones; the rocks of his teeth; and of his hollow bones, mingled with the blood which ran from his vast wounds, they made the vast ocean, in the midst of which they infixed the earth. Then, having formed the heavens of his skull, they made them rest on all sides upon the earth: they divided them into four quarters, and placed a dwarf at each corner to sustain it. These dwarfs are called East, West, South, and North. After this, they went and seized upon fires in Muspelsheim, that flaming world in the south; and placed them in the abyss, in the upper and lower parts of the sky, to enlighten the earth. Every fire had its assigned residence. Hence the days were distinguished, and the years reduced to calculation. For this reason it is said in the poem of the Voluspa, 'Formerly the sun knew not its place, the moon was ignorant of its powers, and the stars knew not the stations which they were to occupy.' The earth is round, and about it is placed the deep sea, the shores of which were given for a dwelling to the giants. But higher up, in a place equally distant on all sides from the sea, the gods built upon the earth a fortress against the giants, the circumference of which surrounds the world. The materials which they employed for this work were the eyebrows of Ymer; and they called the place Midgard, or the Middle Mansion. They afterward tossed his brains into the air; and they became clouds.



“But whence came the men, who at present inhabit the world?”

“The sons of Bore, as they were walking one day upon the shore, found two pieces of wood floating on the waves. They took them, and made a man of the one, and a woman of the other. The first gave them life and soul; the second, reason and motion; the third, hearing, sight, speech, garments, and a name. They called the man Aske, and the woman Emla.” \*

We could greatly extend these quotations; but it will only be necessary to add two or three from the classic authors of Greece and Rome.

Hesiod, the earliest Greek poet, speaks as follows on this subject:—

“First Chaos was; next ample-bosom’d earth  
The seat immovable for evermore  
Of those immortals, who the snow-topt heights  
Inhabit of Olympus, or the glooms  
Tartarean, in the broad-track’d ground’s abyss.  
Love, then, arose most beautiful amongst  
The deathless deities: resistless he  
Of every god and every mortal man  
Unnerves the limbs; dissolves the wiser breast  
By reason steel’d, and quells the very soul.  
From Chaos, Erebus and ebon night;  
From night the day sprang forth and shining air,  
Whom to the love of Erebus she gave.  
Earth first produced the heaven; whose starry cope,  
Like to herself, immense.

She brought  
The lofty mountains forth, the pleasant haunts  
Of nymphs, who dwell midst thickets of the hills.  
And next the sea, the swoln and chafing sea  
Apart from Love’s enchantment. Then, with Heaven  
Consorting, Ocean from her bosom burst  
With its deep deep-eddying waters.” †

Aristophanes has used language of very similar import in his *Aves*:—

“Chaos, and night, and black Erebus, and wide Tartarus first existed. At that time, there was neither earth, air, nor heaven. But, in the bosom of Erebus, black-winged night

\* “The Edda,” Fables i.–v.

† HESIOD’S “Theogony,” ELTON’S Translation.



produced an aërial egg ; from which, in due season, beautiful Love, decked with golden wings, was born. Out of Chaos, in the midst of wide-spreading Tartarus, he begot our race, and called us forth into the light.”\*

We only add an interesting fragment of Orpheus. The whole passage was supposed to have been written by this poet ; but Mr. Cory considers the words printed in *Italics* as only entitled to this distinction, and regards the remainder as the language of the writer who preserved the passage, and who thus endeavoured to explain it on Christian principles :—

*“From the beginning the ether was manifested in time, evidently having been fabricated by God : and on every side of the ether was Chaos ; and gloomy night enveloped and obscured all things which were under the ether. By attributing to night a priority, he intimates the explanation to be, that there existed an incomprehensible nature, and a being supreme above all others, and pre-existing, the demi-urgus of all things, as well of the ether itself, and of the night, as of all the creation which existed and was concealed under the ether. Moreover he says, The earth was invisible on account of the darkness : but the light broke through the ether, and illuminated the earth and all the material of the creation. ....By this power all things were produced, as well incorporeal principles as the sun and moon, and their influences, and all the stars and the earth and the sea, and all things that are visible and invisible in them.”†*

It is a well-known fact, that the philosophers of Greece were not agreed on this subject. While Xenophanes, Parmenides, Zeno, Anaxagoras, Democritus, and Aristotle supposed that matter was eternal ; Hesiod, Orpheus, Pythagoras, Plato, and others, not only acknowledged that the order which reigns in the universe was introduced into it by God, but some of them used language which seems to indicate that they had some ideas of the creation of matter, although these are expressed with such obscurity as to render it very

\* Quoted in FABER'S "Origin of Pagan Idolatry," vol. i. p. 255.

† CORY'S "Fragments," p. 298.



probable that they were only intended to apply to a refined pantheism.

Plutarch, when relating the sentiments of Pythagoras and Plato, tells us they believed that God had generated or produced the world, which of itself was corruptible, as being material, and consisting of parts, yet that it should not perish, Divine Providence having thought it worthy of conservation.\* Plato distinctly says, "The exemplar or archetype of the world is eternal; but the world itself, this visible world, had its commencement in time."† Proclus, in his Theological Institutes, ascribes the same sentiment to Plato; and says himself, that "matter, which is the substratum of every thing, is itself the production of the Creator of all things."‡

Ovid has furnished us with a careful collection of the opinions which were regarded as orthodox by the ancient Romans.§ To give the reader any idea of the sentiments of this writer by a quotation, it would be necessary to copy the first eighty-seven lines of his *Metamorphoses*. It will, however, be sufficient to observe, that he does not distinctly allude to the creation of matter; but, beginning his account with the existence of chaos, follows precisely the order of Moses in the entire process of creation, the whole being ascribed to the agency of an intelligent mind, who is called "God" or "Nature."

We have thus given extracts from the records of history with regard to this subject, as ample as our limits will allow; and we now call special attention to the result. It will, in the first place, be observed, that, varied as the several accounts are, there are points of resemblance common to nearly all of them. The primitive chaos is alike recognised by San-

\* *Pythagoras et Plato mundum a Deo genitum sive productum esse dixerunt, ac naturâ quidem suâ corruptibilem, cum corporeus adeoque sensibilis sit; non esse tamen interitum, providentiâ et sollicitudine Dei ipsum conservante.*—PLUTARCHUS *de Placitis*, lib. ii. cap. 4.

† PLATO in *Timæo*, tom. iii. p. 38, C.

‡ PROCLI *Institut. Theol.* cap. lxxii. p. 447.

§ Although the atheistical doctrines of Epicurus had been previously promulgated by Democritus, and were afterward sustained by the nervous poetry of Lucretius, they did not obtain general countenance.



choniatho, Berosus, the Edda, and Hesiod. The order of creation, as exhibited in the scriptures, is almost literally copied by Virgil, Hesiod, Sanchoniatho, the Zendavesta, and the Hindus. The special prominence given to the creation of man in the Mosaic narrative, is echoed by the Chaldean, the Hindu, and the Roman. These and many other points of co-incidence, which will be apparent to every reader, cannot be ascribed to chance. There must be some reasonable cause : what is it? Those who have felt disposed to disparage the holy scriptures, have laboured to point out the probability that their contents were borrowed from earlier Heathen records. It will appear from the most cursory view of the subject, that this is impossible : not to dwell on the well-established fact that none of the records which have come down to us are as ancient as the Bible, it will be seen at once, that, while the narrative of Moses is a clear, simple, common-sense statement, every other is adulterated to a very large extent with fiction and fable. In such circumstances, nothing can be more absurd than to refer the origin of the intelligible consecutive historical account, to information furnished by the fabulous and poetic. Yet this is a fair specimen of the boasted *reason* of those who deny the authority of the Bible. It must be admitted by all who seek after truth, that there is a much more rational and obvious way of accounting for these remarkable points of agreement. On the presumption that the scriptural account is correct, it is clear that the sons of Noah must have known the history of creation, and transmitted it to their descendants ; and therefore, while the narrative of Moses, dictated by divine revelation, gives the simple truth, the other accounts, while preserving the principal elements of primitive history, are severally found, according to the common law of all traditionary information, corrupted and disfigured, in agreement with the taste and character of the people among whom they exist.

“It is impossible that mankind should have known nothing of the early history of the world until Moses gave an account of it. And it is utterly incredible that all the



early patriarchs, from Adam to Noah, should have been profoundly ignorant of the creation. Moses, therefore, did not now for the first time reveal the origination of the world and its inhabitants. He simply rectified the mythological errors which had been superinduced over the primitive account of those great events, as known to Adam, and transmitted by him to his posterity. While others had disfigured the truth by the wildness of philosophical and idolatrous fiction, he was taught by the Holy Spirit of God to give a clear and perfectly unerring recital of early history." \*

The subject we have thus considered is one of the deepest interest. As far as man is concerned, it is the first chapter of the history of the actions of God. The infinite and eternal Jehovah puts forth his power, and out of empty nothingness builds up the structure of our world, spreads out the heavens, studded with unnumbered stars, garnishes the earth with unspeakable beauty ; and, above all, creates man in his own image, after the model of his own mind. We have not dwelt on this last and most interesting branch of the subject, because we shall have to recur to it in the next chapter ; we therefore simply observe, that while we are indebted entirely to divine revelation for any knowledge of these subjects, we are equally dependent on the same source for the maintenance among men of a correct acquaintance with these important truths. In fact, that which had been revealed in the beginning became corrupted, and was rendered unmeaning, by the admixture of human speculation and superstitious error ; and this motley compound, to which each of the great Heathen nations of antiquity contributed its quota, was handed down to succeeding generations, invested as far as was practicable with the attributes of genuine history, and assuming the garb of true religion. To such a deteriorating extent was this carried, that a comparison of these traditional legends with primitive truth, even at this advanced age of the world's history, forms an employment as useful as it is curious and interesting.

\* FABER'S "Origin of Pagan Idolatry," vol. i. p. 202.



## CHAPTER II.

THE PRIMITIVE CONDITION OF MAN, HIS FALL, AND  
THE PROMISE OF A REDEEMER.

SUBSTANTIAL Agreement between sacred and profane History. MAN'S PRIMITIVE CONDITION—Scripture corroborated by other ancient Testimony—Maimonides—Mohammedan Traditions—Hindus—Zendavesta—Trismegistus—Hesiod—Ovid. MAN'S FALL—*Historical Corroboration*—Custom of Worshipping in Groves—Garden at Cadiz—At Epirus—In Campania—Of the Hesperides—*Sacred Persons of Heathen Mythology*—Apollo—Chrishna—Hercules—Orpheus—Thor—Bacchus—*Heathen Traditions*—Plato—Dicæarchus—Hindus—Persians—*Worship of the Serpent*—Its Universality—Chaldea—Persia—India—China—Syria—Phenicia—Egypt—Greece and Rome—Druids—American Indians—Conclusion from the above Facts—Geographical Position of Paradise—Tree of Life and Cherubim—Review of Man's primitive Condition and Fall—*Consequences of the Fall*—Loss of moral Purity—Of Intercourse with God—Of inward and outward Happiness. PROMISE OF A REDEEMER—Meaning which Adam and Eve attached to it.

WE have already observed the peculiar prominence which holy scripture gives to the creation of man. It is worthy of attention, that, although greatly disfigured by fable, most of the profane histories refer to this fact in a manner extremely similar.

The Chaldean Berosus, for instance, having spoken of the creation of the various animal tribes, describes the creation of man in the following language: "Belus took off his head, while the other gods mingled his blood as it gushed out with the earth, and from thence were formed men." It is scarcely possible to conceive of a more significant mode of expression than this; the ordinary operations of Deity are represented as being unequal to the creation of a being so elevated in character as man: for this purpose it was necessary that there should be some direct communication from Divinity. And hence, instead of the simple and sublime language of Moses, "And God breathed into his



nostrils the breath of life ; and man became a living soul ;” (Gen. ii. 7 ;) we are told that the blood of the god is poured out, and, being mixed with the earth, a man is formed. But the Heathen account is manifestly deficient in philosophical accuracy, when compared with the Mosaic narrative. Berosus represents the life-blood of divinity as having been incorporated into the body of the first human being ; whilst the scripture account supposes the human body to have been first formed, and then the divine energy to have been directly communicated to the soul. It is, however, evident that the Chaldean record was intended to convey a similar meaning ; for, having described this peculiar mode of the creation of mankind, it says, “ On this account it is that they are rational, and partake of divine knowledge.”

The Hindu version is to the same effect. It ascribes the creation of man and woman to the Divine Nature : “ The god, having divided his own substance, his mighty power, became half male and half female.”

The Scandinavian mythology, although it gives a very different account, bears similar evidence to the rich and divinely-appointed endowments of the human mind. The first man and woman having been formed, the gods of northern mythology united their powers to raise them above every other part of creation. One gave them life and soul ; a second, reason and motion ; and a third, hearing, sight, speech, garments, and a name.

The language of Ovid is of similar import :—

“ A creature of a more exalted kind  
Was wanting yet, and then was man design’d,  
Conscious of thought, of more capacious breast,  
For empire form’d, and fit to rule the rest :  
Whether with particles of heavenly fire  
The God of nature did his soul inspire,  
Or earth, but new-divided from the sky,  
And, pliant, still retain’d the’ ethereal energy,  
Which wise Prometheus temper’d into paste,  
And, mix’d with living streams, the godlike image cast.  
Thus, while the mute creation downward bend  
Their sight, and to their earthly mother tend,



Man looks aloft, and with erected eyes  
Beholds his own hereditary skies.  
From such rude principles our form began,  
And earth was metamorphosed into man." \*

This writer seems to refer to each of the preceding testimonies, recognising, at the same time, and asserting the high character and destiny of man, though uncertain as to the precise means by which such an exalted creature was brought into existence.

This being the distinguished origin of man, we proceed to consider his primitive condition.

The passages of holy scripture referring to this subject may be briefly given. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." (Gen. i. 27.) "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." (Gen. ii. 7—9.) "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh, And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed." (Verses 21—25.) "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." (Gen. i. 28.) "Thou hast made him a little lower

\* "Metamorphoses," book i. DRYDEN'S Translation.



than God,\* and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands : thou hast put all things under his feet." (Psalm viii. 5, 6.) "There is a spirit in man : and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." (Job xxxii. 8.) "What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him ? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him ? and that thou shouldest visit him every morning and try him every moment ?" (Job vii. 17, 18.)

This language certainly conveys a very strong idea of the primitive dignity and purity of man. "In his creation and primeval condition, the kindness and love of God eminently appeared. He was made a rational and immortal spirit, with no limits to the constant enlargement of his powers ; for from all the evidence that our own consciousness, even in our fallen state, affords us, it appears possible to the human soul to be eternally approaching the Infinite in intellectual strength and attainment. He was made holy and happy ; he was admitted to intercourse with God. He was not left alone, but had the pleasure of society. He was placed in a world of grandeur, beauty, and utility ; it was canopied with other distant worlds, to exhibit to his very sense a manifestation of the extent of space and the vastness of the varied universe ; and to call both his reason, his fancy, and his devotion into their most vigorous and salutary exercise. He was placed in a Paradise, where probably all that was sublime and gentle in the scenery of the whole earth was exhibited in pattern ; and all that could delight the innocent sense, and excite the curious inquiries of the mind, was spread before him. He had labour to employ his attention without wearying him ; and time for his highest pursuits, of knowing God, his will and his works. All was a manifestation of universal love, of which he was the chief visible object ; and the felicity and glory of his condition must, by his and their obedience in succession, have descended to his posterity for ever. Such was our world, and its rational

\* This is the literal rendering of the Hebrew.



inhabitants, the first pair ; and thus did its creation manifest not only the power and wisdom, but the benevolence, of Deity. He made them like himself, and he made them capable of a happiness like his own." \*

Such was man as he came from the hand of his Maker. With a body perfect in form, full of vigour, as of life, he had an intellectual power that grasped all created objects, and ranged the loftiest heights of sublime inquiry and research ; while his conscience was untainted, and his holy soul held deep and hallowed communion with God : " A little lower than God, crowned with glory and honour."

How strongly do these views of the subject contrast with those which the wisdom of this world has so often exhibited ! According to them, man is represented as commencing his existence in barbarism, and gradually and slowly advancing to that enlarged enjoyment which distinguishes the nations that have attained to high degrees of civilisation and mental culture. We shall not notice the mass of absurdities which this hypothesis involves, but shall cite some testimonies from ancient history which will serve to corroborate the scripture account.

As the ancient Jews may be supposed to have preserved among them tolerably correct views of this subject, we will first give the sentiments of Maimonides.

" 'Let us make man in our own IMAGE, AFTER OUR LIKENESS ;' meaning that he (man) should be possessed of that quality which is able to know and to comprehend those intelligences that have no matter, in the same manner as the angels (do), and thus be similar to them ; so that this is not said with regard to that form which may be perceived by the eye, nor does it refer to the life which is found in every creature possessing animal life ; but (it refers) to that knowledge only which constitutes the quality of the soul, and it is of the QUALITY OF THE SOUL that the scripture speaks (when saying), 'in our image after our likeness !'" †

The Mahomedan traditions are so copious, and so mixed up with extraneous matter, that it is difficult to quote a

\* WATSON'S Works, vol. x. p. 400.

† *Yad Hachasak*, cap. iv. p. 14.



pertinent passage. We select the following: "When God had created Adam, he acquainted the angels with his high dignity, and that he had distinguished him with superior knowledge; in proof of which he made him give names to every object. God made the angels consider Adam as a *Mehaab*, *Ka'bah*, and *Kiblah*\* to which the lights and the righteous were to pray."†

"Our first parents are described to have borne on the exterior of their bodies a sort of transparent integument, in substance like the nail at the ends of our fingers, but of a silvery whiteness, effulgent like the stars of heaven; that part which still adhered to their fingers' ends being left as a perpetual memento of the state of perfect happiness from which they had fallen."‡

The Jains, a Hindu sect who worship Buddha or Menu under the title of Jain-Eswara, suppose "that the period of the world is divided into four ages. The first of these exactly corresponds with the golden age of the classical writers: during its continuance, we are told, men subsisted on the produce of ten celestial trees; that there were no kings; that all were abundantly blessed; and that the people who then flourished were distinguished by the appellation of 'the supremely happy inhabitants of the earth.'"§

The Zendavesta contains the following striking allusion to the primitive condition of man: "After the world had been created in five successive periods, man himself is said to have been formed during a sixth. The first of the human species was compounded of a man and a bull; and this mixed being was the commencement of all generations. For some time after his production, there was a season of great innocence and happiness; and the man-bull resided in an elevated region, which the Deity had assigned to him."||

We now quote an ancient Egyptian author: "The Lord,

\* *Kiblah* is that point to which the righteous turn their faces in their prayers.

† EL MAS'UDI'S "Historical Encyclopædia," p. 55.

‡ *Tarikh Tebry*, quoted in PRICE'S "History of Arabia," p. 4.

§ "Asiatic Researches," vol. ix. p. 257.

|| FABER'S *Horæ Mosaicæ*, cap. i. p. 72.



who is the Creator of all things, whom we truly call God, made the world first.....Because, therefore, that he made this first, and that the work seemed good and fair unto him, as most full of variety and good things, he loved it as a part of his divinity and power; and therefore, because it was of such excellency and goodness, he would have man made, that he might behold the works he had thus made, and likewise imitate his wisdom and providence; for the will of God is the chiefest perfection, in that he fulfilled both his will and his deed in the same moment of time. When he therefore perceived that that image of his (the soul) could not be studious of all things, unless he should clothe it with an earthly covering, he builded for it this house of clay, confounding and mixing both parts into one, as much as each body should be capable. Wherefore he made man of an immortal soul and mortal body, that, being a creature thus composed, he might satisfy both ends, which was, to be in admiration of heaven and to pray for spiritual and heavenly things, and to inhabit and govern these earthly things below.”\*

It is more than probable that the seventh fable in the Edda refers to this subject; but as this application is not certain, we do not quote it; and only add the testimonies of Hesiod and Ovid:—

—————“They lived of old  
When Saturn reign’d in heaven; an age of gold.  
Like gods they lived, with calm untroubled mind  
Free from the toil and anguish of our kind:  
Nor e’er decrepit age mis-shaped their frame.”†

“The golden age was first; when man, yet new,  
No rule but uncorrupted reason knew,  
And with a native bent did good pursue.  
Unforced by punishment, unawed by fear,  
His words were simple and his soul sincere.  
Needless was written law when none oppress’d:  
The law of man was written in his breast.  
No suppliant crowds before the judge appear’d,  
No court erected yet, nor cause was heard,  
But all was safe; for conscience was their guard.”‡

\* HERMES TRISMEGISTUS, book ii. English translation. London, 1657.

† ELTON’S translation of HESIOD’S “Works and Days.”

‡ “Metamorphoses,” lib. i. DRYDEN’S Translation.



Thus do the traditions of various Heathen nations corroborate the scriptural account of the primitive condition of man, and bear united testimony to his intelligence, dignity, moral purity, and intercourse with God.

But, glorious as was our origin, we have soon to contemplate a sad reverse. Dark and dismal shadows of guilt, misery, and degradation overspread the glorious condition of mankind. Yet these only serve to introduce us to an acquaintance with the divine scheme of redemption, the brightest display of God's love to man. These events are so closely allied in their historical relation, that we shall refer to them under one head in connexion with the circumstances under which they transpired. The scriptural account is as follows :—

“And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden ; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food ; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden ; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. The name of the first is Pison : that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold ; and the gold of that land is good : there is bdellium and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon : the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel : that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates. And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat : but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it : for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone ; I will make him an help meet for him. And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air ; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them : and whatsoever



Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

“Now the serpent was more subtile than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise; she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees\* in the garden. And the Lord God

\* So our version renders it; but the original Hebrew has it, בְּתֵיךְ הָגֵן—*which the Septuagint and other translations seem to render rightly, Εν μεσση του ξυλου του παραδεισου, (Gen. iii. 8,) “In the midst of the tree of Paradise.”*



called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

“And Adam called his wife’s name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them. And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which



turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." (Gen. ii. 8—25 ; iii.)

This, considering the important nature of the events narrated, is a very brief account of the most eventful period in the history of mankind. It contains, however, several obscure passages which merit careful investigation, and require a perspicuous and familiar exposition. We shall attempt something of this kind, after we have furnished those illustrations of the subject which profane history and the mythological traditions and rites of the Heathen afford.

In endeavouring to confirm and illustrate the scriptural account of these circumstances, by testimonies drawn from profane authors, it will be necessary to recall the attention of the reader to the most prominent points in the sacred narrative. The first pair were placed in a garden, which had two trees in the midst; these were intimately associated with man's state of innocence, and his fall. The garden was watered by a river, which was divided into four heads. Here the woman ate forbidden fruit from one of those trees, and gave it to her husband, and he did eat. This crime was committed through the temptation of the serpent. The guilty pair were expelled from the garden, and the cherubim and a flaming sword were placed, to guard the way of the tree of life. And, lastly, a Redeemer was promised, who should suffer from the malignity of the serpent, but afterward destroy its power.

It is a difficult task to extract and arrange the complicated allusions to these particulars, which abound in Heathen writings; for, notwithstanding their frequency, they are so often mixed up with fable, or distorted by poetic imagery, that their original design and precise reference to the narrative before us is not easily seen without a wider range of explanatory observation than that to which we must confine ourselves. We shall, however, furnish selections from some ancient accounts of sacred places and persons, and of religious rites and traditions, which may be calculated to throw light upon the subject.



It is a well-known fact, that in patriarchal times, as well as in the Heathen world generally, worship was frequently performed in a grove, or under a high tree. "Abraham planted a grove in Beersheba, and called there on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God." (Gen. xxi. 33.) Afterwards the Israelites were strictly commanded to cut down the sacred groves of the people whom they destroyed. (Exod. xxxiv. 13.) Their kings, in numerous instances, worshipped in groves; and although the practice had then become debased, idolatrous, and therefore forbidden by God, it yet shows that the custom had formerly been very prevalent. Indeed, so general was this practice that Strabo informs us, when he lived, "All sacred places, even where no trees were to be seen, were called groves." The scriptures likewise unite with Heathen testimony to prove that it arose from a reference to Paradise, and the important events which transpired there. This is evident from the language of Isaiah: "They shall be ashamed of the oaks which ye have desired, and ye shall be confounded for the gardens that ye have chosen." (Isai. i. 29.) And again: "They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves, in the gardens behind *one tree in the midst*;" (Isai. lxvi. 17;) a manifest allusion to the tree in the midst of the garden, as described by Moses. But this grove-worship, on account of its perverted and idolatrous character, was prohibited: "Thou shalt not plant thee a grove of any trees near unto the altar of the Lord thy God." (Deut. xvi. 21.) It is therefore among the Heathen, who continued and carried out those practices, that we have to search for the most striking allusions of this kind.

At Cadiz, which was formerly a Phenician colony called Gades, there was a delightful garden, consecrated by solemn rites and ceremonies to idolatrous worship. In the *midst of it* were two very remarkable trees, according to Philostratus, though Pausanias\* mentions only one. They grew out of the tomb of Geryon, a tricorporate monster, which Hercules

\* PAUSANIAS in *Attica*, cap. xxxv.



was there said to have overcome and slain. These trees were of a mixed nature, and it was affirmed of them, that they distilled drops of blood. Near to this sacred enclosure was a lake, with an island in its centre, on which stood a temple to Hercules, who was worshipped here under the title of Σωτήρ, or the Saviour. From this sacred enclosure all women were driven away, as their sex was looked upon as the primary cause of mischief and calamity. And, lastly, the whole temple was guarded by lions and a flaming fire, which turned every way, to forbid the approach of the profane and unholy. Within the sacred enclosure, moreover, was an altar dedicated to Old Age; and those who attended it are mentioned as the only persons who "sing pæans in honour of Death." Near this were three others, dedicated to Poverty, Manual Labour, and Hercules, or the Saviour. It will be admitted that the points of resemblance between this and the scripture narrative are too many and too striking to be the result of accident, and that they therefore contain an intended allusion to Paradise and its most remarkable events.

On the shores of Epirus was another such sacred place, where the same paradisaical features are also to be discovered. There was a river "parting into four heads;" also a temple dedicated to the compound figure Chimera, which represented as well the traditional vestiges of the cherubim as the revolving fire or flaming sword which was placed in Paradise. Near it was a spot called Phenice, formerly consecrated to the worship of the palm, or phoenix, the emblem of the tree of life.

On the coast of Campania there was another sacred enclosure on a large scale. Here too there was one tree in the midst, and around it the usual curious compound figures armed with flames. There were also traditionary vestiges of the river of Paradise parted into four heads. Before any one could enter into this place, which was regarded as mysteriously connected with the invisible world, a peculiar sacrifice was to be offered; the blood of the sacrifice was then poured out; and the poet describes the spirits of the dead



as crowding around to touch the blood, that they might thereby obtain an entrance into Elysium, or the abode of happy souls.

The Garden of the Hesperides affords another such instance. It was supposed to be situated at the extreme limit of Africa. Atlas was said to have surrounded it on every side with high mountains, on account of an ancient oracle, which affirmed that a son of the Deity would at a certain time arrive, open a way of access thither, and carry off the golden apples which hung on a mysterious tree in the midst of the garden. There is a curious antique, yet extant, in which Hercules is represented as standing with an apple in his hand before the tree, around which a serpent is enfolded. The hero is armed with a club, and the serpent appears to have received a wound on the head, and is called Typhon, or Python, which word signifies "to overpersuade, to deceive;" the appellation under which we generally find the mythological monster which tradition told the Heathen had been the source of all evil, and was to be vanquished only by the Son of God in a human form. Now, the very name Pitho or Python designates the great deceiver of the world. When the damsel at Philippi is said to have been "possessed of a spirit of divination," it is called in the original *πνευμα Πυθωνος*, "a spirit of Python;" (Acts xvi. 16;) manifestly showing that the Pagan Python was none other than a traditionary memorial of "that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceived the whole world." (Rev. xii. 9.)

Other instances might be cited; but these are sufficient to show that the Heathen did, in their sacred places, refer to Paradise, and to the prominent circumstances connected with the primitive condition of man, his fall, and the promise of a Redeemer. This may be partly accounted for in the following manner: whatever might have been the precise character and object of the cherubim and the fire, (on which subject we shall hereafter have to remark,) all antiquity agrees that, after the expulsion of our first parents from the garden, they approached as near as possible to



these cherubic fires, and worshipped God. Hence in after-times, when scattered over the earth, men appear to have modelled their places of worship according to their ideas of Paradise, to accord as far as possible with what they believed to have existed in primitive times; and hence the numerous coincidences to which reference has been made. A notion was also much prevalent in early times, that the happiest boon which the pious could receive after death was to gain admittance into that garden of delights from which the first man had been driven: on this account many of the sacred places of the Heathen were called *hades*; and even Jewish phraseology countenances the same idea. The famous Elysian Fields of classic poetry afford an illustration of this; and in connexion with them we read of the four rivers, Styx, Phlegethon, Acheron, and Cocytus, in allusion to the rivers of Paradise.

The sacred *persons* of Heathen mythology exhibit similar references to the history of man in Paradise.

Of this, Apollo is a remarkable instance. He was a son of the supreme god, and is said to have destroyed the serpent Pytho as soon as he was born, by shooting him with an arrow. The Thessalians affirmed that in the valley of Tempe, Apollo, after his victory over the serpent, underwent a lustration. Here also he was crowned with laurel, and, according to some, with that mysterious fruit, the gathering of which had proved the source of all evil, and occasioned the necessity for that victory over the serpent. Hence, moreover, "having first gathered a sacred branch with his own right hand," he came as a conqueror to Delphi. He is also said to have undergone all this out of love to mankind.

The history of the Indian Chrishna is of similar import. He, too, was an incarnation of the almighty God in human shape, and had a severe conflict with the great envenomed serpent *Kalli Nager*, who had poisoned the waters of the river, and thereby spread death and destruction around. Chrishna, casting *an eye of divine compassion* on the multitudes of dead which lay before him, attacked



the mighty serpent, which soon twisted his enormous folds about his whole body ; but Chrishna took hold of the serpent's heads one after another, *and set his foot upon them* : the monster struggled in vain, and, after expending all his poison, found himself totally overwhelmed. Chrishna, in pity, commanded the serpent to be gone quickly into the abyss ; saying, "Since I have combated with thee, thy name shall remain during all the period of time ; and Devatas and men shall henceforth remember thee without dismay." So the serpent went into the abyss, and the water which had been infected by his poison became pure and wholesome.\*

To the history of Hercules some reference has been already made ; but his connexion with the paradisaical history is yet more distinctly marked. He was a mortal son of the supreme god, and was attacked, even in his cradle, by two large serpents, which he destroyed.

Another instance is given in the case of Orpheus. He is said to have dwelt amongst the Edonians, who seem to have derived their name from Eden. His wife, whom he tenderly loved, soon after her marriage received a mortal bite from a serpent ; this occasioned his descent into hades, which, as we have seen, was closely connected with memorials of Paradise. We are further informed that Orpheus taught the unwelcome truth, "that woman was the origin of all evil," which announcement is said ultimately to have occasioned his destruction.

The Gothic mythology is equally explicit on this point. Thor is represented as the first-born of the principal divinity ; and is exhibited as *a middle deity, a mediator between God and man*. He is said to have wrestled with death, and in the struggle to have been brought upon one knee,—to have bruised the head of the great serpent with his mace,—and, in his final engagement with that monster, to have beaten him to the earth and slain him. The victory, however, cost the life of the mediator-god ; for, recoiling back nine steps, he

\* MAURICE'S "Ancient History of Hindostan," vol. ii. p. 278.



falls dead upon the spot, suffocated with the floods of venom which the serpent vomits forth upon him.\*

The sacred *rites* of the ancient Heathen are equally replete with allusions to the early history of man.

Bacchus was worshipped as the first planter of trees, and cultivator of gardens. In the impure rites connected with his worship, the god is represented naked, in a car drawn by lions, leopards, and other beasts of prey, in manifest allusion to the state of man, and the harmlessness and subjection of the inferior animals, in primitive times. The persons who took part in those ceremonies used to carry serpents in their hands, and with horrid screams called upon *Eva! Eva!* They then crowned themselves with these reptiles, still indulging in the same frantic exclamations. When it is remembered that the oriental pronunciation of the name "Eve" was always in two syllables, we shall see how exactly these Heathen orgies had some reference to the circumstances of Paradise, and particularly to the great mother who, "being deceived, was in the transgression." (1 Tim. ii. 14.) It is a remarkable and important consideration, that Epiphanius, Clemens of Alexandria, and others, who had manifold opportunities of witnessing these ceremonies, were of decided opinion that this reference was designed.†

We now select a few of the many traditions handed down from remote antiquity, which tend to illustrate and confirm the scripture account.

Plato informs us, that the first arrangement of things which was ordained of God contained neither human politics, nor the appropriation of wives and children; but that all lived in common upon the exuberant productions of the earth. They had abundance of fruits and trees; and they were blessed with a soil so rich, that it brought forth those fruits spontaneously, and without the labour of cultivation. They spent their time in the open air, and associated toge-

\* "The Edda," fables xi. xxv. xxvii. xxxii.

† We are indebted for several of the preceding illustrations to a very able little work entitled, "The Testimony of profane History. By Matthew Bridges."



ther without shame in a state of nakedness. They conversed not only with each other, but likewise with the beasts : yet God was their special guardian ; and by a peculiar interposition provided them with food, as men are now wont to provide for the inferior domestic animals. He mentions that he had learned these particulars from an ancient fable ; and concludes with saying, that “such matters must be laid aside until some meet interpreter of them should be revealed.” \*

Dicæarchus, as quoted by Porphyry, gives a similar account. The first men, according to this writer, “were born near to the gods, were of a most excellent nature, and lived most holy lives : so that, when compared with the degenerate modern race of mortals, they might well be esteemed a golden generation. At that time, nothing which had life was slaughtered ; and from the universal felicity which then prevailed, the poets borrowed their pictures of the golden age.” †

The following lines of Hesiod appear to refer to the temptation of the woman, and its fatal consequences :—

“Whilom on earth the sons of men abode,  
From ills apart and labour’s irksome load,  
And sore diseases, bringing age to man,  
Now the sad life of mortals is a span.  
The woman’s hands a mighty casket bear ;  
She lifts the lid, and scatters griefs in air :  
Alone, beneath the vessel’s rims detain’d,  
Hope still within the’ unbroken cell remain’d,  
Nor fled abroad ; so will’d cloud-gatherer Jove :  
The woman’s hand had dropp’d the lid above :  
Issued the rest, in quick succession hurl’d,  
And woes innumerable roam’d the breathing world :  
With ills the land is rife, with ills the sea,  
Diseases haunt our frail humanity.” ‡

The mythology of India affords a similar illustration. “There can arise little doubt,” says a late eminent author, “but that by the *Satya* age, or age of perfection, the

\* PLATO, *Polit.* pp. 271, 272, quoted in FABER’S “Origin of Pagan Idolatry,” vol. ii. p. 12.

† FABER’S “Origin of Pagan Idolatry,” vol. ii. p. 13.

‡ ELTON’S translation of HESIOD’S “Works and Days,” p. 125.



Bramins obscurely allude to the state of perfection and happiness enjoyed by man in Paradise. It is impossible to explain what the Indian writers assert concerning the universal purity of manners, and the luxurious and unbounded plenty prevailing in that primitive era, without this supposition. Justice, truth, philanthropy were then practised among all orders and classes of mankind: there was then no extortion, no circumvention, nor fraud used in their dealings one with another. Perpetual oblations smoked on the altars of the Deity; every tongue uttered praises, and every heart glowed with gratitude to the Supreme Creator. The gods, in token of their approbation of the conduct of mortals, condescended frequently to become incarnate, and to hold personal converse with the yet undepraved race of mortals; to instruct them in arts and sciences, to unveil their own sublime functions and pure nature, and make them acquainted with the economy of those celestial regions into which they were to be immediately translated when the period of their terrestrial probation expired." \*

The reference to the Fall is equally distinct, and in agreement with the Mosaic account:—"The facts narrated uniformly correspond, and the consequences are equally tremendous. Hence possibly it has arisen, that in their mythology the king of the evil *assoors* or demons is called the king of serpents, of which poisonous reptiles, folded together in horrible contortions, their hell, or *narraka*, is formed. What is very remarkable, is, that the name of this serpent monarch is NAGA, and he is the prince of the Nagis, or Nacigs, in which Sanscrit appellation we plainly trace the Hebrew NACASH, which is the very word for the particular serpentine tempter, and in general for all serpents throughout the Old Testament." †

The testimony of the *Vishnu Purana* is more direct and striking:—"Formerly, when the truth-meditating Bramá was desirous of creating the world, there sprang from his mouth beings especially endowed with the quality of good-

\* MAURICE'S "Ancient History of Hindostan," vol. ii. p. 346.

† *Ibid.* p. 348.



ness ; others from his breast, pervaded with the quality of foulness ; others from his thighs, in whom foulness and darkness prevailed ; and others from his feet, in which the quality of darkness predominated." Here, although the moral impurity of man appears to be attributed to his creation, we find almost immediately afterward a ray of purer traditional light correcting the error, and containing a distinct allusion to the Fall. We are told, "The beings who were created by Bramá of these four castes, were at first endowed with righteousness and perfect faith ; they abode wherever they pleased, unchecked by any impediment ; their hearts were free from guile ; they were pure, made free from soil by the observance of sacred institutes. In their sanctified minds Hari dwelt, and they were filled with perfect wisdom, by which they contemplated the glory of Vishnu. After a while, that portion of Hari, which has been described as one with Kála, ('time,') infused into created beings sin, as yet feeble, though formidable, or passion, or the like : the impediment of the soul's liberation, the seed of iniquity, sprung from darkness and desire. The innate perfectness of human nature was then no more evolved : the eight kinds of perfections, Rasolásá and the rest, were impaired ; and these being enfeebled, and sin gaining strength, mortals were afflicted with pain." \*

The following is from the Zendavesta of the ancient Persians :—

After the world had been created in five successive periods, man himself is said to have been formed during a sixth. The first of the human species was compounded of a man and a bull ; and this mixed being was the commencement of all generations. For some time after his production, there was a season of great innocence and happiness ; and the man-bull resided in an elevated region, which the Deity had assigned to him. At last, an evil one, denominated Ahriman, corrupted the world. After having dared to visit heaven, he descended to earth, and assumed the form of a serpent.

\* Vishnu *Purana*, translated by Professor WILSON, pp. 44, 45.



The man-bull was poisoned by his venom, and died in consequence of it. Meanwhile, Ahriman threw the whole universe into confusion; for that enemy of good mingled himself with every thing, appeared every where, and sought to do mischief both above and below.\*

There was a remarkable tradition of the sabbath at Delphi; for we are told, that in the temple of Apollo every seventh day was a solemn festival, on which the priestesses chanted pæans in honour of the serpent.†

These quotations, which might be greatly multiplied, are, in our estimation, of vast moment. We dismiss this part of the subject, by calling special attention to one peculiar and distinguishing feature of it,—the worship of the serpent. Several of the preceding quotations have referred to this; but its singular character and prevalency merit more particular notice. It is one of the most remarkable among Satanic triumphs, that our “adversary the devil” should have succeeded not only in destroying the primitive purity of man, but also in inducing fallen and degenerate man to worship, actually to offer divine adoration to, that reptile form under which he had seduced and destroyed the first of our race, and perilled the immortal interests of themselves and all their posterity.

We are afraid that our readers will at first sight be disposed to regard this as an idle conceit, rather than as a grave and important characteristic in the religion of the world. That this superstition is most irrational, that there is nothing in common between Deity and a reptile, we freely admit; yet, when we recollect that Satan dared to say to the Son of God himself, “All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me,” (Matt. iii. 8,) we cannot doubt, that his heart is set on elevating himself into an object of adoration; and that what he had failed to obtain from the Messiah, he would use his utmost influence to elicit from mankind. And if this could be realized, it must

\* FABER'S *Horæ Mosaicæ*, vol. i. p. 72.

† “Asiatic Researches,” vol. ix. p. 275.



be evident that no form could be selected as the object of this worship which would stamp the victory with so much significance, as that under which the successful temptation was carried on and consummated.

We do not, however, indulge in speculation, but narrate facts. The serpent, then, is clearly exhibited as the cause of the Deluge in the early mythology both of Hindustan and of Egypt. If the earliest form of idolatry was the worship of the sun, it is certain that serpent-worship, if not coincident, immediately followed. The Egyptian legends inform us, that Helios (the sun) was the first of the gods; but we are at the same time informed, that Helios married Ops (the serpent deity). The worship of the serpent prevailed in Chaldea. In the temple of Bel or Belus at Babylon "was an image of the goddess Rhea, sitting on a golden throne; at her knees stood two golden lions, and near her very large *serpents* of silver, thirty talents each in weight." There was also "an image of Juno, holding in her right hand the head of a serpent." \* This superstition prevailed in Persia to such an extent, that we are told, "They all worshipped the first principles under the form of serpents, having dedicated to them temples, in which they performed sacrifices, and held festivals and orgies, esteeming them the *greatest of gods*, and *governors of the universe*." † As an emblem of Divinity, the serpent enters deeply into the religion of the Brahmins. "The malignant serpent Caliya, who was slain by Vishnu, (in his incarnation of Chrishna,) because he poisoned the air and destroyed the herds on the banks of the Yamuna, was deified and worshipped by the Hindûs, in the same manner as Python was adored at Delphis." ‡

"The great Chinese *dragon*, so conspicuous in every public and private edifice, was the symbolical serpent of ancient mythology, under a more fanciful and poetic form. 'It was the genial banner of the empire, and indicated every thing that was sacred in it. It was not only the

\* DIODORUS SICULUS, lib. ii. sect. 70.

† EUSEBIUS, *Præp. Evang.* lib. i. cap. 42.

‡ "Asiatic Researches," vol. viii. p. 65.



stamp and symbol of royalty, but is sculptured in all the temples, blazoned on the furniture of the houses, and interwoven with the vestments of the chief nobility.' The emperor bears a dragon as his armorial device, and the same figure is engraved on his sceptre and diadem, as well as on all the vases in the imperial palace.\* The superstition of Japan was in every respect similar to that of China. The dragon was held in equal veneration in both countries."†

The serpent-worship of Syria has left stronger records of its original prevalence than verbal coincidences. The coins of the Tyrians bear testimony to the existence of this superstition in Phenicia, in characters which it is impossible to mistake; and this practice is further illustrated by the legend of Ophioneus, which so accurately coincides with the scripture history of Satan, that Celsus ventured to adduce it as a proof that Moses had borrowed his account from the fables of the Heathen.‡

Of all the idolatry of the nations of antiquity, none was so infamous as that of Egypt, and by none was the worship of the serpent made more prominent. This reptile entered into the Egyptian religion under all his characters, of an emblem of DIVINITY, A CHARM, AN ORACLE, and A GOD. Nor was the origin of this practice unknown or unnoticed: bracelets in the form of serpents were worn by women in the time of Clemens Alexandrinus, who thus reproves the fashion: "The women are not ashamed to place about them *the most manifest symbols of the evil one*; for as the serpent deceived Eve, so the golden trinket in the fashion of a serpent misleads the women." §

There can perhaps be no stronger proof of this, than the fact that in Egyptian hieroglyphics the symbol which represents their deity is a serpent, or three serpents.

The serpent form entered largely into the mythology of

\* DEANE'S "Worship of the Serpent," p. 69.

† *Ibid.* p. 73.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 99.

§ STILLINGFLEET'S *Origines Sacræ*, vol. ii. p. 115; DEANE'S "Worship of the Serpent," p. 133.



Greece and Rome. It was worshipped by the Druids, and is found pervading the idolatry of America. In a word, the worship of the serpent was universal. One who has gone into the subject with no less diligence than talent, does not scruple to declare, "I have no hesitation in affirming my belief that the PARADISIACAL SERPENT and THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE are the prototypes of idolatry." \*

"The mystic serpent entered into the mythology of every nation; consecrated almost every temple; symbolized almost every deity; was imagined in the heavens, stamped upon the earth, and ruled in the realms of everlasting sorrow. His *subtilty* raised him into an emblem of wisdom: he was therefore pictured upon the ægis of Minerva, and crowned her helmet. The knowledge of futurity which he displayed in Paradise exalted him into a symbol of vaticination; he was therefore oracular, and reigned at Delphi. The 'opening of the eyes' of our deluded first parents obtained him an altar in the temple of the god of *healing*; he is therefore the constant companion of Æsculapius. In the distribution of his qualities the genius of his mythology did not even gloss over his malignant attributes. The fascination with which he intoxicated the souls of the first sinners, depriving them at once of purity and immortality, of the image of God and the life of angels, was symbolically remembered and fatally celebrated in the orgies of Bacchus, where serpents crowned the heads of the Bacchantes. But the most remarkable remembrance of the paradisiacal serpent is displayed in the position which he retains in Tartarus. A *cunodracontic* Cerberus guards the gates; serpents are coiled upon the chariot-wheels of Proserpine; serpents pave the abyss of torment; and serpents constitute the caduceus of Mercury, the talisman which he holds when he conveys the soul to Tartarus. The image of the serpent is stamped upon every mythological fable connected with the realms of Pluto. Is it not then *probable* that in the universal symbol of Heathen idola-

\* DEANE'S "Worship of the Serpent," p. 245.



try we recognise the universal object of primitive worship,—  
THE SERPENT OF PARADISE ?” \*

We do not cite these instances of Heathen conformity to the letter of scripture because we have any idea that the word of God needs external support to sustain its character as pure and perfect truth, but because, according to the scripture account of the common origin of all men, we might reasonably suppose that the history and religion even of Heathen nations would retain some vestiges of primitive times and circumstances. The preceding instances form a selection from a vast mass which might be produced, to show that this reasonable hope is met, and that nations the most remote and the most deeply sunk in the darkness of superstition, unite in furnishing evidence corroborative of the leading events of paradisiacal history. And therefore, whatever scepticism or infidelity may object, we venture to maintain that the wide range of Heathenism, dark and deadly, full of cruelty and blood, as it is, abounds nevertheless with monuments which stand out in solemn grandeur illuminated with rays of divine truth, bearing everlasting testimony to the verity of God's revealed word, and particularly sustaining the inspired accounts of the early history of our race.

There are two or three particulars contained in the Mosaic narrative, which are obscure, and have been judged worthy of an attempt at explanation.

The first relates to the geographical position of Paradise. The language of the text is, “The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.” (Gen. ii. 8.) The ancient Mahomedan writers held the notion that Paradise was not on the surface of the earth, but in some elevated or heavenly place or superior orb; and that, after their sin, our first parents being sent down to this nether world, Adam descended on a mountain in Ceylon, and Eve at Juddah, which is the port of Mekka in Arabia; while the serpent reached the earth first at Isfahaun. They moreover go on to say,

\* DEANE'S “Worship of the Serpent,” p. 446.



that the stature of Adam was so elevated, that his brow brushed the sky, and the converse of angels was audible to his ear. This greatly aggravating his punishment, God was pleased in mercy to reduce his height to a measure more commensurate to his altered state of being.\* But, not to dwell on these fancies, it is clear that Moses intended to communicate to his readers a knowledge of the relative position of the primitive garden. He wrote for the purpose of conveying an intelligible description of its locality; and no other meaning can be put on his language: "And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates." (Verses 10—14.) Now it is evident that the names here used were given subsequently to the Flood: Moses does not present us with antediluvian land-marks. Havilah, Cush, and Assyria, are names of postdiluvian origin, and must have been used for the purpose of defining the district spoken of. Euphrates then is one river: it has not changed its name since the time of Moses. Hiddekel is by all our best writers supposed, if not proved, to be the same with the Tigris. We are then conducted to the district where these rivers have their origin. There is more difficulty in defining the river Pison; but it has with great probability been supposed to be the same with the Absarus, which has its rise in the mountains of Armenia, not far from the origin of the Euphrates and Tigris, and which falls into the Black Sea in the territory of the ancient Colchians, famed in all antiquity for its gold. The fourth river, Gihon, appears to be the Gyndes, rising in the same district as the others, and ranging through Chusis-

\* *Tarikh Tebry*, PRICE'S "Arabia," p. 4.



tan. We need scarcely add that this points out Armenia as the site of Paradise.\*

Another important, but very disputable, part of this narrative, is that which refers to the tree of life, and the cherubim.

Were it consistent with the duty which we have undertaken, we would willingly avoid entering upon an inquiry that has engaged the attention of the most eminent men, without eliciting any satisfactory result; and which, therefore, seems to present to us a task that is hopeless. As, however, this obscure subject stands intimately connected with the entire scope of the history before us, we are bound to state what appears to be its true and proper meaning. The great cause of the difficulty which has prevented a consistent interpretation of these points, seems to us to have been a neglect of the truly *religious* design and intention of the sacred writer. Merely philological researches can never ascertain the true and proper aspect of such passages, without a due regard to their relative bearing on the whole economy of grace.

In the first place, then, it is not reasonable to expect that we should be able to apprehend the true meaning and intent of these particulars, if we regard them as mere incidents in the temporal history of the first man. On the contrary, we feel disposed to consider Adam here in his federal character, and believe that, even in those paradisiacal events, through him were given to mankind distinct intimations of the way of access unto God through the mediation of the promised Redeemer.

But we proceed: Respecting the tree of life the text speaks thus:—"And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." (Gen. ii. 9.) And afterward: "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now,

\* See this subject stated at length in FABER'S "Origin of Pagan Idolatry," vol. i. pp. 300—306.



lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever : therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden." (Gen. iii. 22, 23.) From this it has been supposed that the tree of life was appointed as the means of conferring immortality on man ; and that, having fallen, he was excluded from access to it, and therefore necessarily became mortal, and gradually, but certainly, approached the period of his dissolution. Against this explanation Kennicott has brought all his ingenuity and learning to bear, in a powerful train of argumentation. We cannot detail his reasonings, but may produce the result in the version which he has given of texts quoted above : "And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that was pleasant to the sight, and that was good for *food, and a tree of life* ; and in the middle of the garden the tree of knowledge of good and evil." Again : "And the Lord God said, Behold ! the man hath behaved as one of us as to the test of good and evil : and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take again of the trees of life, and eat, and live on happy all his days." We do not presume to canvass the learned investigations employed to elicit this result ; but we are compelled to acknowledge that this version does not bring conviction to our mind. We do not see how it can be supposed that man, under a sense of guilt, could live on happily all his days, even if favoured with access to the trees of Paradise. On the whole, the authorized translation seems most agreeable to the scope and tenor of the passage. It does appear more than probable that there was in Paradise a "tree of life." Whether it was intended as an instrumental means of counteracting the natural and ordinary effect of the air and aliment on the human system, and thus of conferring immortality on man ; or whether it was designed to have a symbolical and sacramental effect ; or to serve these purposes unitedly ; we do not pretend to decide. But we have no doubt that access to this tree stood in some way connected with religious privilege, and in some manner was an outward sign of spiritual access to God.

Intimately associated with this point is the passage which



speaks of the cherubim. We are told that God “drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden *cherubims*, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.” (Gen. iii. 24.) The opinions given on this subject are endless.

Some have thought that the cherubim was an angel-guard placed at the gate of Paradise, for the purpose of preventing fallen man from having access to the tree of life. Others imagine that the cherubim were designed to exhibit a representation of the Trinity, in connexion with the assumption of human nature by the second Person. To the first of these suppositions it is naturally objected, that the means appear to be unnecessary to the accomplishment of the end. If it had been intended only to prevent fallen man from having access to the tree of life, means more natural might have been suggested than an angel-guard armed with flaming fire; and it is still more extraordinary, that this should be placed “at the east of Eden,” in order to protect a tree which grew in “the midst” of the garden. The second hypothesis appears to be still more untenable. That Jehovah, who laid it down as a primary law of revealed religion, that no likeness or resemblance of any thing “in heaven or earth” should be made or exhibited in connexion with his holy and spiritual worship, should, in this striking way, present to mankind a visible representation of his Divine Majesty, seems most improbable. This improbability is rendered absolute, by the circumstance, that there is great reason for believing the cherubim in the Mosaic tabernacle to have been modelled after those paradisiacal forms; and the whole tenor of that dispensation shows that these were by no means intended to be regarded as a representation of the Divine Majesty.

In this difficulty, we have to collect that information on the subject to which we have access, and then form a careful judgment respecting it.

Of the word itself, we are told that it never appears as a verb in the Hebrew Bible, and therefore is supposed to be compounded of כּ *ke*, a particle of resemblance, “like to,”



“like as,” and *רַב* *rub*, “he was great, powerful,” &c. It is indeed the formal name of magnificence, or majesty, and dominion. If we refer to the opinions of ancient authors as to the application of the term under consideration, it may be stated that Grotius says the cherubim were figures like a calf. Bochart and Spencer think they were very nearly the figure of an ox. Josephus says, they were extraordinary creatures, of a figure unknown to mankind. Clemens of Alexandria believes that the Egyptians imitated the cherubim of the Hebrews in their sphinxes and hieroglyphical animals. The descriptions which scripture gives of the cherubim appear to differ; but all agree in representing a figure composed of various creatures,—a man, an ox, an eagle, and a lion.

The first use of the term is in the passage under consideration; the second is, where Moses is instructed to make it or them of the gold of the mercy-seat, and to portray them on the veil. (Exod. xxv. 17—22; xxvi. 31, 32.) The third is where Solomon is instructed to frame others around the holiest of all, besides those upon the mercy-seat, which were then carried into the temple. (1 Chron. xxviii. 18. See also 1 Kings vi. 23—35; 2 Chron. iii. 7—14.) The fourth is in Psalm lxxx., where God is said “to dwell between” them. The fifth reference is in the visions of Ezekiel. (Ezek. x. 1—20; xi. 22; xli. 18, 20, 25.) The sixth is in the vision which John saw of the four living creatures around the throne, and in the midst of the throne; and although the term is not used, yet the description corresponds so exactly with Ezekiel’s vision, that there can be no doubt of the identity. (Rev. iv. 6—11.)

We request particular attention to these passages. We begin with the last. That our readers may see the force of this spirited description, we direct attention to chap. v., the whole of which must be read, in order to apprehend the scope of the writer. We give the most important words: “I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which



are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four-and-twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." (Verses 6—9.) We do not pretend to unravel the mysterious import of these sublime predictions; but, we think, enough appears on the surface of the passage to warrant the opinion, that it was intended to exhibit the infinite pre-valency of the vicarious sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the revelation and consummation of the great purposes of God through the redemption which is in his blood. This seems to be clear; and we satisfy ourselves with having elicited this general application of the prophecy.

We now turn to the vision of Ezekiel, and request a careful reading of the eleventh chapter of his prophecies; in which we have a description of the throne of God, encompassed by living creatures,\* improperly rendered "beasts" in the Revelation. Here too we have their compounded nature exhibited,—a cherub, a man, a lion, an eagle. This passage appears mainly to allude to the abandonment of the temple by Almighty God, on account of the idolatry and wickedness of the Israelites; but it is important to observe, that Ezekiel, who was a priest, and consequently well acquainted with the interior of the temple and the holy place, on seeing this glorious representation, exclaims, "I knew that they were the cherubims." (Chap. x. 20.) It is clear, therefore, that when the mysteries of redemption were revealed to the mind of the prophet of the Apocalypse, precisely the same imagery was employed as when God signified to Ezekiel His retirement from the temple,

\* Compare chap. i.



which had been consecrated to His glory at Jerusalem; and that this imagery was modelled in exact resemblance to that which was placed over the mercy-seat in the Jewish tabernacle. As the direction given to Solomon does not contain any additional feature in the subject, we proceed to the directions given by God to Moses for the formation of the holiest of all in the tabernacle. "And they shall make an ark of shittim wood. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold.....And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee. And thou shalt make a mercy-seat of pure gold: and thou shalt make two cherubims of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy-seat. And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end: even of the mercy-seat shall ye make the cherubims on the two ends thereof. And the cherubims shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy-seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy-seat shall the faces of the cherubims be. And thou shalt put the mercy-seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony." (Exod. xxv. 10—22.)

Now it will be observed by the careful reader, that, minute and particular as is this account, we have in it no description of the cherubim: their *position* is most carefully pointed out, but their *form* is not described. This is a most important consideration, as it inevitably warrants the conclusion that these figures were well known, and that all that was necessary was to point out their relative position in the Mosaic tabernacle. After the exodus of the Israelites, and before the erection of the tabernacle, Moses speaks of "the presence of the Lord," and the manna is commanded to be laid up "before the Lord, to be kept for your generations;" and it was accordingly "laid up before the testimony to be kept." (Exod. xvi. 33, 34.) This language



appears to warrant the opinion that, before the ecclesiastical polity and the tabernacle ritual were communicated by direct revelation from God, the children of Israel, walking according to the principles of patriarchal faith, had a place which was specially regarded as the seat of the Divine Presence, and in which were deposited *memorials* of his goodness and mercy.

We now refer more particularly to the text which has occasioned these researches. Our authorized version gives it thus: "So he drave out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." (Gen. iii. 24.) On this passage an excellent author observes, "The word translated 'placed' is literally 'to dwell as in a tabernacle, to inhabit.' The word 'cherubim' has, in the original, the definite article 'the' before it. 'Sword' is introduced, while no such weapon as a sword had yet been known: the phrase is, 'the fire of wrath.' A sword, being the instrument of wrath, had afterwards the name of 'wrath' applied to it; but in this place the primary idea of the word should be used, because the object to which it was secondarily applied was then unknown. Besides, here, if the word meant 'sword,' the phrase would literally be, 'the fire of sword,' which is absurd. 'Turning every way,' is the *same word* which the translators render in Ezekiel, chapter i., 'infolding itself;' and 'keep,' although properly translated, does not, in the original, mean here 'to guard,' but to keep in the sense of 'observe;' in the same sense in which it is used in the phrase, 'to *keep* the commandments of the Lord.'

"Had the translators of the English Bible, then, not been misled by some idea about *a guard around the tree*, they would have rendered the verse thus: 'So he drave out the man. And he inhabited' (or 'dwelt between') 'the cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and the fire of wrath' (a fierce fire) 'infolding itself to preserve inviolate the way of the tree of life.' " \*

\* MORISON'S "Religious History of Man," p. 97.



Enough, then, appears to have been obtained by the examination of these scriptures to warrant the opinion that, under the various aspects in which the dispensation of grace has been presented to man, the imagery, the memorials, and the language now under consideration have been maintained, and that too with the same spiritual import. If any thing be necessary to confirm this opinion, it is supplied in the following words, in which Ezekiel, applying this figurative language to the king of Tyre, says, "Thou hast been in Eden, the garden of God. Thou art the *anointed* cherub that covereth; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire." (Ezek. xxviii. 13, 14.) This language clearly proves that the Edenic cherubim were essentially the same with those of the tabernacle and the prophecies.

What is the judgment to which this extended investigation has conducted us? Simply this,—that the cherubim, the fire, and the Divine Presence, were manifested in Eden as they were afterward in the temple, to show God's anger against sin, to teach, through the mediation of the promised Saviour, a way of life, and to afford sinful man a way of access unto God. We think these memorials were intended to speak a language more forcible than that of words; and to say, as was afterwards said when the same figures were raised in the tabernacle, "There will I meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from between the cherubim." (Exod. xxv. 22.)

If our opinion respecting the tree of life be correct,—that it stood in some way connected with religious privilege, that it was designed in some sense to represent a spiritual access unto God,—then the whole connexion of the subject gives a clear and consistent sense, and the God of all grace is seen seated between the cherubim to preserve and maintain among men the way of the tree of life, the way of spiritual access to himself.

We have satisfied ourselves with general terms in this short exposition. We dare not attempt to give a more particular explanation, and doubt whether sufficient light has come down to us to render this possible. But we are of



opinion that it was intended that we should have some definite ideas of this part of holy scripture ; and, with all deference to the many other views which have been propounded, we think these to be substantially correct.

A brief review of the prominent points which have passed under our notice in this chapter may now be expected ; but this cannot be supplied in such a manner as to satisfy all emergent inquiries. Never did human history record such happiness and glory, or detail such tremendous ruin. Never did human nature appear so elevated or so fallen. Here we behold the first pair, in all the charms of their pristine innocence ; beautiful in their appearance, mighty in intellect, happy in God. They walk and talk with the great Author of their being ; they hear his voice, they receive instruction from his lips ; they are formed in his image, are adapted and designed to hold the most intimate spiritual communion with their Creator. In this state they live : placed in a garden to dress and to keep it, they have within their reach all that can minister to their happiness. God gives to man dominion over all the earth ; the majestic lion and the fierce tiger bow to his will. His dominion is not merely a name. The subjects of his wide domain are brought before him : was ever marshalled army beheld on earth, which indicated to its sovereign so much real glory as this, when all nature bowed to her earthly lord ? And amid this august scene man proves that he is equal to his position ; he looks through the varied ranks of created being, and gives names to all ; his eye is not deceived, his judgment does not falter ; he executes his task : “ And whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.” (Gen. ii. 19.)

This is not allegory ; it is fact. It is revealed by Him whose infinite wisdom and almighty power brought it to pass. How unlike the speculations of philosophy, the dreams of perverted reason ! Vain man, who would be wise, spurns the teachings of revelation, and taxes his boasted powers to account for his own existence ; and how does he perform his task ? We might have supposed that, however defective, it would not lack dignity, that it would be calcu-



lated to sustain the character of man, that it would not be unworthy of the mighty aspirations of his mind, the dazzling coruscations of his fancy, the burning energy of his genius. Alas! how different! These exhibitions all unite in one particular,—they all degrade him to the earth. Like frogs or mice, man arises from slumbering animation, and creeps into being from the mud of the Nile; or some one of the monkey tribe, more sagacious than his fellows, walks erect, and his descendants, after wading through ages of bestiality and barbarism, at length become the progenitors of man,—of poets and philosophers! Perish such wisdom! The records of divine revelation furnish a true, and therefore a rational, account of the origin and primitive condition of man: He “was made a little lower than the angels, and crowned with glory and honour.” (Psalm viii. 5.)

But in this honour man did not abide. His Creator, regarding him as a rational and moral agent, gave him a law for the regulation of his life. This law was explicit in its terms, and adapted to the condition of man; it was calculated to answer its design, by affording a rule of life to the creature, and testing his fidelity to his Creator. He was forbidden to eat of the fruit of a certain tree which was called “the tree which is the *test* of good and evil.”\* Adam knew all this, and fully understood his case. However obscure the application of some of the terms employed may be to us, there can be no doubt that he was fully acquainted with their import. We must always remember that we do not possess a complete record of the revelations made to the first man: we have only a brief and rapid sketch of the prominent points of his history; enough for our information, which is the object of scripture, not a complete developement of all that transpired between the first pair and their Maker. Yet even with our limited means, we are enabled to take a correct view of their condition.

“That the first man had been instructed concerning the

\* DR. KENNICOTT'S “Dissertation on the Tree of Life,” p. 35



*lie*, and taught the distinction between it and the *truth*; that he knew it to be expected of him to stand firm in that allegiance from which others fell; that he was extensively instructed in 'the deep things of God,' as figuratively preached in the creation; and that the spirit of *prophecy* also was granted to him; appears from many circumstances attending his situation.

"His own form was figurative or illustrative of heavenly truth; and when Eve was taken from his side, he uttered a prophecy concerning the institution of marriage amongst his descendants, while as yet he had no children; a prophecy which contained a great mystery or figure concerning 'Christ and his church.' He was placed in a garden containing figurative trees; he lived by a sacramental tree, the tree of life, 'in the midst of the Paradise of God;' he was forewarned by another figurative tree; and he gave figurative names to the animal creation; amongst which, it is most remarkable, was the prophetic name of *subtilty* and *deceit*, given by himself to the very creature through whose agency Eve was deceived and he seduced." \*

It is, however, easy to perceive that, although man was placed in this condition of trial, it was a state which necessarily arose out of the moral dignity of his nature, and his religious capabilities and powers. Hence Milton represents the Almighty as saying of man:—

"He had of me  
All he could have; I made him just and right,  
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.  
Such I created all the' ethereal powers  
And spirits, both them who stood, and them who fail'd.  
Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.  
Not free, what proof could they have given sincere  
Of true allegiance, constant faith or love,  
Where only what they needs must do appear'd,  
Not what they would? What praise could they receive?  
What pleasure I, from such obedience paid?  
When will and reason (reason also is choice)  
Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,  
Made passive both, had served necessity,  
Not me?"†

\* MORISON'S "Religious History of Man," p. 54.

† "Paradise Lost," book iii.



Man felt that he was free, and fatally exercised his freedom. The process by which this ruin was effected is minutely detailed in holy scripture. The woman, deluded and deceived by the artifices of Satan in the serpent form, ate of the forbidden tree. Adam, although "not deceived," followed the fatal example of his wife, and dared to sin against God: the tree answered to its name,—it was a *test* of good and evil. The utmost efforts of genius, the most energetic eloquence, the mightiest power of poetry, have been called into exercise to portray the consequences of this terrible catastrophe; but they have failed; no language can meet the case,—it baffles all description. Man is seen stripped of the glory with which he was crowned. He was possessed of transcendent dignity; he is now a rebel, and a sinner. Yet, although we do not pretend to convey any thing like an adequate description of this fall, it may be necessary, in a few words, to state what may be regarded as the most prominent of the evils which were thus induced.

This is a subject respecting which we must rely for information on revelation alone. Only the eye of God saw all the consequences of the sin of Adam; and if we are permitted to obtain a full acquaintance with the evils which have resulted to our race from sin, we must obtain it from the teaching of His Spirit.

Nothing can be more unreasonable than to confine ourselves, in the investigation of this subject, to the description furnished in the first chapters of Genesis. As we have before remarked, these do not pretend to give us a full account of all the revelations made to the first pair; they do not tell us all they knew, but simply give for our information an abstract of their history as a part of the entire revealed truth of God. If, therefore, we would understand what is implied in the fall of man, and have distinct views of the consequences which resulted from the transgression of Adam, we must attend to all that is communicated, bearing on this subject, in every part of the holy scriptures, and especially in the New Testament, in which we have the fullest developement of the will of God.



Acting on these convictions, we have studied this subject in the light of revealed truth, and give the conclusions to which we have been conducted.

1. Man lost the purity of his moral nature.

He was made good,—this was his element. The understanding aspired after it; the will clave to it; the affections rejoiced in it. In him all was order, all was peace. But by the Fall, his understanding became darkened, his will rebellious; his affections were totally vitiated; in a word, he became a sinner. We wish, in speaking on this subject, to be distinctly understood. In our judgment, the word of God teaches that this ruin was entire and complete. Yet it does not appear that the fall of man consisted in the destruction of the pure principles of his nature, and the introduction into his moral system of others essentially evil; on the contrary, the effect produced was simply a perversion of his moral powers from good to evil. He had, while upright and holy, deliberately chosen to transgress the divine command; and that fatal act destroyed the God-ward tendency, and the beautiful harmony, of his moral system, and introduced disorder and spiritual death into every part. The intellectual and moral powers, the passions, affections, and propensities, which previously acted in perfect unison with each other, while all bowed in subjection to the will of God, and rejoiced to do his pleasure, are now seen rioting in rebellion against him, and warring against each other. The reason is blinded, and puts darkness for light, and light for darkness; the propensities, setting at defiance the control of reason, impel the mind to a course of action whose end is merely momentary gratification; the affections, which had been supremely centred in God, are now engrossed by selfish and earthly objects. And thus the whole mind, retaining all the elements of its original and elevated character, has become depraved and debased, sunk in misery and sin. Hence it is that the moral constitution of man bears witness to the truth of his history. There is not, in the wide range of his frailty and folly and sin, a single power or affection of mind observable, which might not have existed in perfect purity



and holiness. And thus man, while exhibiting a fearful extent of moral ruin, presents, at the same time, characteristics obviously adapted to the remedial operations of redeeming grace.

2. By the Fall, man lost his intercourse with God.

The history of man's early career does not give us much information respecting his primitive religion, and the happiness and privilege which stood connected with it; but the general theology of the Bible casts a flood of light on this subject. We need not here go into detailed argumentation; it will be sufficient to call attention to the important fact, that the most sublime spiritual privileges of the New-Testament religion—privileges which comprehend fellowship with God, Christ as our "life," and the attainment of the Divine image, as accessible to all believers—are uniformly exhibited as a restoration of the soul of man to a state which it had formerly occupied, but from which it had fallen. We hear of a *renewal* of the soul "in knowledge after the image of him that created him;" (Col. iii. 10;) of being "*renewed* in the spirit of your mind, that ye" may "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness;" (Eph. iv. 23, 24;) that "as in Adam all die, *even so* in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. xv. 22.) In fact, the whole scheme of mercy is a process of *redemption, restoration, recovery*. If, therefore, the state to which the soul of man is raised by the gospel, indicates the primitive condition of his mind, then are we certain that he walked in hallowed and intimate spiritual intercourse with his Maker. This idea certainly harmonizes with all that is said of his primeval state. But if this be true, how fallen is he now! His thoughts do not aspire after God; his natural and general character is to be "without God in the world." (Eph. ii. 12.) How far this great deprivation contributed to the completion of his moral ruin, we will not attempt to say; but that it displays a dark and fearful feature in the character of fallen man, is very evident.

3. As a result of the Fall, man lost his inward and outward happiness.



The disorder which had been introduced into his nature was sufficient to destroy his peace. But to this was added the loss of an approving conscience. Conscious purity was exchanged for conscious guilt ; the thoughts of God, which before gave him rapturous delight and holy expectation, now fill him with terror and dismay. And to this we must add the loss of Eden, and, with it, of perfect outward happiness, and exposure to pain and want, to sickness, sorrow, and death.

Here, then, are exhibited to our eye the fatal results of transgression. Man, guilty, depraved, and wretched, lies in ruin ! It might have astonished us, if, after God had finished his glorious creation of universal nature, some malignant and mighty power had been permitted to darken the sun, or to spread ruin and desolation over the earth ; yet these foul exploits would have been as nothing in comparison with that which we have contemplated. Here the lord of creation is stripped of his glory, and prostrated in the dust, exposed to all evil, covered with guilt and shame ; and this is his degraded condition, while immortality of being is written upon his nature, and moral responsibility still attaches to every volition of his mind, and to every action of his life.

If the Divine Goodness and Compassion toward man had terminated here, the history of our race would never have been written ; the first pair would have been consigned to destruction, and a dark veil drawn over all the features of their case. But it was not so. The tempter had triumphed, man had fallen ; but God, in the boundless riches of his wisdom and mercy, had resources sufficient to meet his case ; and from that moment a scheme of redemption was gradually unfolded, the object of which was to show mercy triumphing over judgment, and to raise man from the ruins of the fall to more than his original glory and happiness.

Nothing can present this merciful intervention in a more striking manner than the simple announcement of it in the Mosaic narrative. The sin is committed, the Almighty descends ; he calls upon the man, who equivocates and impeaches the woman, and obliquely impugns the arrangements of God. The woman is questioned, and she blames



the serpent ; when the Almighty pronounces judgment on the offending parties.

On the serpent a curse is pronounced, and the animal form under which the temptation had been so speciously put forth is condemned to degradation, and is therefore presented to all future generations as a living monument of this great transgression ; the connexion between this debased creature and the original transgression being still more strongly marked by the existence of a perpetual antipathy between the serpent and mankind. The woman is doomed to subjection to her husband, and to sorrowful and painful conception ; the man is destined to obtain his daily bread by painful labour, from a soil burdened with the Divine malediction.

But the most remarkable feature in this whole procedure, is the gracious announcement of mercy to fallen man. Of the seed of the woman it was said to the serpent, “ It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” (Gen. iii. 15.) We find it necessary again to remark that we do not pretend to confine our inquiries on this subject to these words : they were not written as a part of holy scripture until about two thousand five hundred years afterward, when a rich amount of revealed truth was at the same time communicated to the world. Taking these words, then, as illustrated and unfolded by the stupendous scheme of redemption, in which sense, as explained by simultaneous revelations, they were undoubtedly understood by our first parents, they teach us some important facts.

In the first place, we are distinctly told that the artifices and energies of Satan, which had been thus far successful, should be ultimately foiled and defeated. No figure can more clearly point out entire subjection and defeat than the bruising of the *head* ; and the application of this language to the serpent gives it the greatest possible force : to that creature, which possesses no limbs, or other means of offence or defence, the bruising of the head is utter ruin. No language can more efficiently represent the entire prostration of his power, the complete defeat of his designs.



Again : it is predicted that this defeat shall take place through means which magnify the wisdom and mercy of God, and in the most striking way cover the foul seducer with shame as well as ruin. He had not assailed the man ; shrinking from the bright intuition of his enlightened mind, he had assailed "the weaker vessel," and, through her, had triumphed. But, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God !" From her who had thus been the instrument of the ruin, is to come forth the Redeemer, of man. The Seed of the woman is to bruise the head of the serpent.

It is both interesting and desirable to have some distinct idea of the meaning which the fallen pair attached to this primitive promise. There are two means by which this information may be obtained. Under the same dispensation, and guided in their religious views and feelings mainly by the revelations made to the first man, the patriarchs lived from the Fall to the Flood. Then, long before the people of God possessed a written revelation, the various tribes of the human family were scattered over the earth. They carried with them every where the elements of the primitive faith ; and, although these were afterwards corrupted and depraved by the most abominable doctrines, and stained with the foulest idolatries, they, nevertheless, generally bore testimony, as we have already seen, to the important fact of a promised Redeemer. In those mythologic traditions, all the external circumstances of the subject of this promise stand out in bold relief : a Son of a God is born of a woman, and is therefore mortal ; he is engaged in some desperate warfare with a malignant spiritual power, which generally assumes the form of a serpent ; the god-man suffers, sometimes dies ; yet is finally victorious, and great good accrues to others through his triumph.

And it is remarkable that, while the Heathen records warrant the belief that the first pair and their descendants had clear and correct views of the leading circumstances of mediatorial redemption, holy scripture assures us that they



apprehended its saving character, and understood its spiritual efficacy. "By faith," we are told, "Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous." (Heb. xi. 4.) We do not stay here to investigate all the parts of this interesting narrative; a more favourable opportunity for this will occur hereafter: but we may observe that the faith here spoken of must have had an object. What was it? The entire scope of scripture teaching replies, The promised Saviour. Let this be taken in connexion with the fact of the appointment of sacrifice, the residence of the cherubim, and the way of the tree of life; and it will appear sufficiently evident that the promise of a Redeemer was made so distinctly and intelligibly to fallen man, as to exhibit to his mind an object of faith and hope, and point out to his guilty spirit a way of access unto God. If Adam had not clear views of redemption, when did Abel acquire them? or Enoch? or Noah? Following the guidance of holy scripture, we are directly led to the opinion that the first pair who had transgressed the Divine command, and introduced guilt and sin into the world, were first made acquainted with the merciful interposition in their behalf, and invited to approach his mercy-seat, to obtain reconciliation and life.

How deeply interesting, how truly sublime, is the view here presented to our consideration! A creature so wonderfully formed, yet so deeply fallen; possessing such high intellectual powers, yet spiritually prostrated in consequence of sin; a being who had held intimate communion with his Maker, subjected to punishment on account of sin; and yet again restored by a Divine plan of redemption into covenant relation to his God!

"How poor, how rich, how abject, how august,  
How complicate, how wonderful, is man!  
From diff'rent natures marvellously mix'd,  
Connexion exquisite of distant worlds!

\* \* \* \*

Midway from nothing to the Deity!  
A beam ethereal, sullied and absorpt!



Though sullied and dishonour'd, still divine !  
Dim miniature of creature absolute !  
An heir of glory, a frail child of dust !  
A worm ! a God !”

How instructive, how pregnant with important teaching, must the history of a race of such beings be, when composed of the most authentic materials which have come down to our time, arranged and illustrated in the clearer light which the holy scriptures afford ! This is the task we have undertaken ; and we shall endeavour to prosecute it in the following pages.



## CHAPTER III.

## THE HISTORY OF MANKIND FROM THE FALL TO THE FLOOD.

Introductory Remarks—Genealogical Table—Adam—His intellectual Endowments, Employments, and Clothing—SECOND GENERATION—Division of Labour—Rights of Property—Phenician and Hindu Accounts—Cultivated State of Society—THIRD GENERATION—FOURTH DITTO—General Dissoluteness of Manners—"Sons of God"—Profaneness—FIFTH GENERATION—Phenician Traditions—SIXTH GENERATION—SEVENTH DITTO—Polygamy—Speech of Lamech—Infidelity—Enoch—Antediluvian Kings—Fable of Oannes—EIGHTH GENERATION—Nomadic Life adopted—Poetry and Music—Working of Metals—Identity of Tubal-Cain with Vulcan—NINTH GENERATION—TENTH DITTO—Noah—Probable Population of the Antediluvian World—Longevity of the Antediluvian Patriarchs—Giants—History of the Period.

IN applying the term "history" to the account which we may be enabled to furnish of the generations from Adam to Noah, we are aware that we are using language in an accommodated sense. No sufficient materials remain for the composition of that which, in the strict acceptation of terms, would be called a history. Our purpose, however, is to supply, from various sources of information, as consecutive, intelligible, and accurate an account of these early times as possible.

It may also be remarked, that, although we place in juxtaposition the various records of profane authors with that of holy scripture, we have no intention of breaking down, or in any degree weakening, the distinction which exists between the relative truth and authority of these several means of information.

We are deeply convinced, and fully prepared to avow our conviction, that the Bible alone can be regarded as furnishing an account which, so far as it extends, is perfectly true. If, then, we are asked why we place by its side, and incor-



B I E

## ED &amp; PROFANE AUTHORS.

| IAN KINGS<br>to Berosus.     | NOTICES OF INVENTION, RELIGION,<br>SCIENCE, ART &c.                                                                 | Year<br>before<br>Christ |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
|                              | <i>Creation of the World and of Man.</i>                                                                            | 5507                     |
|                              | <i>Sacrifices of Cain and Abel; Death of<br/>Abel; Banishment of Cain.</i>                                          | 5407                     |
|                              |                                                                                                                     | 5307                     |
|                              | <i>Cain builds a city. Worship of the<br/>Sun noticed.</i>                                                          | 5207                     |
|                              | <i>Astronomy studied by Seth.</i>                                                                                   | 5107                     |
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|                              |                                                                                                                     | 4907                     |
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porate with its teaching, the imperfect and doubtful fragments which have been handed down to us by profane authors, our reply is two-fold: First, as much perverted ingenuity has been employed for the purpose of producing an impression that the Mosaic records are opposed to the historical remains of the most celebrated nations of antiquity, it is important to expose this fallacy, and to show that all which is worthy of being regarded as authentic in these remains tends rather to confirm and to illustrate, than to contravene, the scriptural narrative. And, further, although we do most implicitly rely on the authority of Moses, and do not fully confide in any other, we nevertheless regard it as interesting and useful to gather up the historical and traditional notices of the early ages, which, floating downward on the stream of time, have been arrested and preserved for our meditation and instruction, and thus to obtain the best and fullest collateral knowledge of the infancy of the world.

In entering upon this part of the subject, we beg to call particular attention to the Comparative Table which is annexed. It will be found to contain an outline of the information which is supplied respecting the several generations from Adam to Noah, by Moses, Sanchoniatho, the Hindu Puranas, and the Chaldean chronicles of Berosus; accompanied by notices of the most striking circumstances and events. In our remarks on this subject, we shall observe the order here pointed out, availing ourselves of other means of information as they may arise. The reader will perceive that we have followed the Septuagint chronology. This is done for reasons which have been stated at length in the Preliminary Dissertation; and it only remains to remark respecting it, that although a thorough investigation of the several dates might lead us to see the propriety of suggesting some corrections; yet as these would not be so extensive as to affect the general scope of the subject, we shall avoid the necessity of tedious and minute inquiries, which would be more curious than profitable; and, adhering to the chronological numbers of the LXXII., endeavour to



give a consistent account of the prominent events and general character of this remote age.

We have already referred to the state and circumstances of the first pair ; and have little further to add, either from scripture or from other ancient records. It is remarkable that the names given in the Puranas \* should so closely resemble those of the scripture account. Adim and Iva appear to be precisely the same as Adam and Eve, especially as every Hebrew would pronounce the latter word in two syllables, as E-ve, or E-va.

Protogonus, in Sanchoniatho, (*apud* EUSEB.,) signifies "first made ;" and it seems to be the translation into Greek of the Egyptian title of Adam, taken, as that author professes, from the pillars of Thoth. Mr. Bryant says, AD and ADA signify "first ;" more laxly, "a prince or ruler : " therefore AD AD answers to "the most high," or "most eminent." May not this be referred to Adam ? Sir William Jones queries whether Adam may not be derived from *Adim*, which in Sanscrit means "the first." This is singular, as it is the very name given to the first man in Captain Wilford's collections from the Puranas. It is likewise the name of the first Menu, who was also called "the son of the self-

\* As we shall frequently refer to this source of information, we think it right to give the following confirmation of its character and authority : "We have been presented with a genealogical table of the great Hindu dynasties by Captain Wilford, (*Asiatic Researches*, vol. v. p. 241,) which, he says, is faithfully extracted from the Vishnu Purana, the Bhagavat, and other Puranas, and which, on the authority of numerous mss. which he had collated, he exhibits as the only genuine chronological record of Indian history which had yet come to his knowledge. But this differs in numerous particulars from that of the learned pundit Radhacant, exhibited by Sir William Jones, and which Sir William says that 'Radhacant had diligently collected from several Puranas.' Sir William Jones's list was evidently extracted from the Bhagavat only. Wilford's list was more varied and *authentic*. There is no doubt that the genealogies of the Puranas have been compiled from older authorities, and that their differences are chiefly attributable to the degree of care with which the common authorities have been consulted and represented. The latter series are sufficiently consistent, and are corroborated in many cases by collateral evidence ; and the earlier dynasties, when the chronology is corrected, are, in all probability, *much more authentic than has been sometimes supposed*."—WILSON'S Edition of MILL'S "History of India," vol. i. p. 162.



existent." (See Luke iii. 38.) The Persians, too, denominate the first man *Adamah*. Sale says that this word is Persic, and in its primary sense means "red earth;" and in all the Oriental languages "man" in general, but eminently the "first man."\*

The condition of Adam and his wife after their fall presents a singular and obscure topic of inquiry. With a mind of vast intellectual power, Adam was evidently favoured with great endowments; although he could have possessed but a limited experience. In those circumstances, numerous and conflicting have been the opinions formed respecting his actual state. As we are not prepared to give a portraiture of this, we should not venture to remark upon it, had it not appeared to us that serious mistakes have been generally made by writers on this subject. Nothing, for instance, is more common than to judge of the attainments, the language, the intellectual operations of Adam, from an estimate of his external condition and physical necessities. "He could," we are constantly told, "have known only what his circumstances required. In geography, he understood not the globe, but was conversant only with his garden. In science, he was unacquainted with a cyclopædia, and knew nothing but what sufficed for his life and station. In natural history, he was not versed in the various productions of the earth, but was acquainted with those only which were found in Eden." It may be neither easy nor profitable to repel these conclusions at length; although we frankly avow that our judgment revolts alike from the premisses and the inductions which are drawn from them.

Let the circumstances and condition of Homer, Virgil, Milton, Galileo, and Newton be considered on the same principles; let the most extended view be taken of their state; and then, let any man, from this, account for the production of the *Iliad*, the *Æneid*, and "Paradise Lost." On these principles, let any one explain the sublime discoveries which have been made in natural philosophy and mathematics. If

\* See CALMET'S "Dictionary," by TAYLOR, article *Adam*.



Bloomfield, making shoes in a garret, could employ his mind in the composition of poetry which has delighted posterity ; and Goldsmith, compounding drugs in a laboratory, could indite imperishable pictures of human life ; and Burns, following the plough or keeping sheep on the hill-side, could arrange "thoughts that breathe in words that burn," for the admiration of future ages ; we are at a loss to know why the first man, who was eminently God's own workmanship, should be ground down into a mere animal existence, without the means of exploring regions of thought, or rejoicing in the vigorous exercise of his imagination, and in the liberal expansion of his mind.

We are well aware of the efforts which have been made by learned men to account for the origin of language, and to give a philosophical explanation of its progress, as well as that of the various useful arts, and know that we may provoke hostility by impugning conclusions raised by the united exercise of so much learning and genius. We are nevertheless constrained to say that, in our judgment, nothing can be more evident than that man came from the hand of God replete with every intellectual endowment, possessed of an ample and most efficient language, and having a range of knowledge and mental energy equal to the prominence of his condition ; while it appears to our mind equally clear, that the opposite opinions are an insult to common sense, and a reflection on the Almighty, by directly contradicting the whole tenor of his revealed truth.

After the Fall, the man and his wife were sent forth from Eden : he was doomed to till the ground from whence he was taken. There can be no question that he had the means of effecting this object. We have no information respecting his residence, or his implements, or to what extent he was enabled to practise mechanical arts : one thing is certain, that the account of Moses does not hint at any difficulty arising on these grounds.

On one point we have information. Finding their need of clothing, they entwined together large leaves, or the branches of the fig-tree, for a covering. This mode was superseded



by the special intervention of God, who "made coats of skins, and clothed them." (Gen. iii. 21.) The observations of Calmet on this particular are worthy of notice. "They had endeavoured to cover themselves with trees; but the inter-twining, the plaiting of a leaf or leaves, of boughs or branches, recalled no image of death; it shed no blood, it expressed nothing that included the idea of substitution or atonement; and therefore it was rejected. The skin of a beast, however, was not to be procured without first taking away the life of that beast; and the life of the beast could not be taken away, without reminding Adam of the penalty threatened,—*death*! What a subject does this offer to the imagination!"\* So that not only their clothing itself, but more especially the materials of which it was composed, served constantly to keep under the eye of mankind their sin, their danger, and their way of deliverance.

We now proceed to *the second generation*.—Here the scripture narrative gives the tragic story of Cain and Abel. But as we shall have to describe the leading features of that account in considering the religion of this period, we avoid going into detail for the present, and simply call attention to the fact, that even in the first family there was a regular division of labour. "Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground." (Gen. iv. 2.) There existed also a distinct recognition of the rights of personal property. Cain brought for an offering the fruits of the ground, and Abel "the firstlings of *his* flock." (Verses 3, 4.) "And Cain builded a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch." (Verse 17.)

The Phenician annals afford but little information. They say that the descendants of the first pair in this generation were Genus and Genea; names which identify the entire narrative with the line of Cain.

The Hindu account is interesting. In the elder line the name of the patriarch is Priyavrata, who is said to have married the daughter of Visvacarma, the chief engineer of

\* TAYLOR'S edition of CALMET'S "Dictionary," article *Adam*.



the gods. In the other branch of the family, the son of the first man is called Uttanapada. "He had two wives, Suruti and Seruchi. By the first he had Dhruva, and by the second Uttama. Uttanapada was exceedingly fond of Seruchi, which gave rise to the following circumstances: whilst he was caressing Uttama, his son Dhruva went to him, and was repulsed. Dhruva burst into tears, and complained to his mother, who advised him to withdraw into the deserts. He followed her advice, and retired to the banks of the Jumna, where he gave himself up to the contemplation of the Supreme Being, and the performance of religious austerities. After many years, the Supreme Being appeared to him, and commanded him to put an end to his austerities, and return to his father, who had relented. He went accordingly to his father, who received him with joy, and resigned the kingdom to him." Dhruva, like Enoch in scripture, is commended for his extraordinary piety, and the salutary precepts which he gave to mankind. He did not taste death, but was translated to heaven, where he shines in the polar star. Here Enoch and Enos are confounded together. Uttama gave himself up to dissipation, and was killed in a quarrel which occasioned a war, that was only ended by the interposition of the first man.

It is worthy of observation, that all the accounts referred to agree in one important particular,—they all describe a state of cultivated society. Here is no barbarism, no lack of knowledge; every thing required by the circumstances of mankind is effected without difficulty. And it is singular that, in the Indian records, one grandson of the first man is eminently pious, and another is killed. Here is a partial agreement, although the discrepancy is sufficient to prevent the suspicion that one narration was copied from the other.

*The third generation.*—This does not exhibit much that is interesting: the scripture account is confined to the names of Cain and of Seth.

The Phenician annals say, "Afterwards, by Genus, the son of Protogonus and Æon, were begotten mortal children, whose names were Phôs, Phôr, and Phlox" (or "light, fire,



and flame"). "These found out the way of producing fire by rubbing pieces of wood against each other, and taught men the use thereof."

The account given from the Puranas for the last generation also includes this, as Uttama and Dhruva are of this generation. We have in those traditions the earliest intimations of the existence of kingdoms, and the practice of war.

*The fourth generation.*—Here Moses simply gives the names of the patriarchs Irad in the line of Cain, and Cainan in the family of Seth. Sanchoniatho says, that "the men of this generation were of vast bulk and height, whose names were conferred upon the mountains which they occupied: thus from them Cassius, and Libanus, and Antilibanus, and Brathu, received their names." These had indiscriminate intercourse with women, without regard even to the nearest relationships of life.

The Puranas here afford us no information, except the names of the persons. It will be observed that we have in this generation the first reference to a general dissoluteness of manners. The scripture account, without specifying any particular period, says, "It came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose." (Gen. vi. 1, 2.) Commentators generally have supposed that by "the sons of God" we are to understand the children of Seth; and by "the daughters of men," the female descendants of Cain. We can see no reason for this opinion. We find nothing analogous to this refined theological sense of the terms in the account which Moses gives of Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob. None of these, however eminent for piety, are called "sons of God." Besides, Adam had other children than Cain and Seth: how would their descendants have been designated on this principle? Other writers, aware of the doubtfulness of this interpretation, have entertained the absurd idea that holy or fallen angels are here spoken of, as having had



intercourse with women.\* Let us see if another and more consistent sense of the passage cannot be found.

Before we enter on a critical examination of this text, we notice a passage in a preceding chapter, referring to the time of Enos:—"Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." (Gen. iv. 26.) Now it will be seen at once, that the words in which this passage is rendered in our version, cannot be taken in their strict and proper signification, or they do not correctly set forth the meaning of scripture; for in an absolute sense they are not true: Adam and Abel had certainly worshipped God, and "called upon his name," and therefore men did not now *begin* to do so. From this difficulty we turn to the marginal translation, which reads, "to call themselves by the name of the Lord." This version of the passage has led many learned men to suppose, that at this time the pious descendants of Seth formed themselves into a distinct society or body, which they called after the name of the Lord. But this opinion appears to have no sanction in any of the preserved remains of antiquity. We find no allusion to this society, by this or any other name, in any of the subsequent writings of Moses; nor can we discover any thing in the facts recorded to support this interpretation. We cannot, for instance, see any reason why the children of good men and wicked women should, more than others, become mighty men, men of renown. There is, however, another rendering of the text which some of the best scholars contend is not only allowable, but required, by the original words. They say that the word which we render "began" should be translated, "began profanely;" and that we are therefore led to the belief, that the Holy Spirit marks out, in this scripture, the beginning of that awful profanation by which proud and wicked men had arrogated to themselves, and to each other, the names, titles, and attributes of Deity. "Then men profanely began to call themselves by the name of the Lord." If this be the true sense of this passage, we can

\* "Ancient Universal History," vol. i. p. 41.



easily offer a consistent interpretation of the text to which our attention was first directed. If proud and powerful and wicked men were called after the name of God, then by "the sons of God" we should understand the sons of those mighty and profane men. These, we are told, "saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them for wives" (the word means "to ravish, to take by violence") "of all which they chose." Inflamed by passion, their desires were unchecked by the dictates of reason, the claims of right, or the principles of religion. They were given up to unbridled licentiousness. The latter part of the passage states, that the issue of this connexion were "mighty men, men of renown."

In favour of this sense, it may be urged that it accords with the conduct of those powerful but wicked men who in later ages acted in exact conformity with the letter of the text, according to this last rendering; it affords important information respecting those vices of government and society which soon after filled the world with violence; and it presents a consistent account of the origin of those mighty men whom the scriptures call "giants."

These reasons appear to us deserving of attention: but we should not have thought them sufficient to justify an emendation of the passages which have been brought under consideration, had we not other and ample authority for the alteration.

The learned author of the "Essay for a New Translation" defends at large the interpretation we have given. He says, "It was easy to have observed that the word *Elohim* often signifies no more than a judge or a sovereign, or a person invested with authority, as the best interpreters do acknowledge; and that, as the Hebrew does express the inferior sort of people by 'the sons of men,' so 'the daughters of men' signify no more than the daughters of the inferior sort. It must have been observed further, that the verb *Labach* not only signifies 'to take,' here, and in several other places, but 'to take by force,' or surprise, or 'to ravish.' So that the words should be rendered, 'That the sons of the



sovereigns seeing that the daughters of the inferior sort were fair, they took them by force, and ravished them at their pleasures,' as some versions \* and interpreters have expressed them." †

To the same effect is the paraphrase which Dr. Wall has given of this passage: "When men began to multiply in the earth, the *chief men* took wives of all the handsome *poor women* they chose. There were tyrants in the earth in those days: and also after the antediluvian days, powerful men had unlawful connexions with the inferior women; and the children which sprang from this illicit commerce were the celebrated heroes of antiquity, of whom the Heathens made their gods."

The editor of a recent amended version of the Holy Bible gives the following as a translation of those texts: "Then began men to be called by the name of the Lord." "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of the chiefs saw the daughters of men that they were beautiful; and they took them wives of all whom they chose. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of the chiefs came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became men of renown, the mighty men of old."

To these testimonies we add one from the Jewish authorities. "They suppose, that, by 'the sons of God' in this place, are meant the princes, great men, and magistrates of those times, who, instead of using their authority to punish and discountenance vice, were themselves the greatest examples and promoters of lewdness and debauchery; taking 'the daughters of men,' of the inferior and meanest sort of people, and debauching them by force." ‡

The Jewish interpreters referred to in the preceding extract are the Targums of Onkelos, and Jonathan Ben Uzziel, R. Sol. Yarchi, Aben Ezra, and others: in fact, Dr.

\* This is the reading of the Alexandrine copy of the Septuagint.

† "Essay for a New Translation," part i. p. 104.

‡ "Universal History," vol. i. p. 41.



Adam Clarke does not scruple to say, "that most of the Jewish doctors were of this opinion."

We should not have been so particular in our examination of these passages, had they not involved a most important feature in the history of this age. According to the reading of these texts in the authorized version, although we are told that previously to the Deluge the earth was filled with violence, we have not a single intimation of any deterioration of morals, or of the existence of any religious or political causes in operation, likely to lead to so serious a result. On the contrary, the establishment of religious societies, banded together in the name of the Lord, as indicated by the marginal reading, would furnish a great amount of conserving influence, and thus tend to check prevailing corruption. The lamentable result casts great doubt over these opinions. But, if the interpretation now advocated be received, we have a clear notice of a combined religious and political deterioration, which, rising into vigorous action with an increasing population, at length overruns the whole surface of society, and introduces and confirms the most fearful and extensive corruption. Thus the scripture account is rendered consistent with itself, and with the traditions preserved by Heathen nations. It is specially desirable that we should, as far as possible, have definite opinions on this subject, because what is said respecting the subsequent generations must be explained and applied according to the views which are adopted on this point.

*The fifth generation.*—The scriptures merely mention the names of Mehujael in the family of Cain, and Mahalaleel in that of Seth, without supplying any other information.

Sanchoniatho says, that "Memrumus and Hypsuranius were the issue of these men," (those spoken of in the preceding generation,) "by connexion with their mothers. Hypsuranius inhabited Tyre: he invented huts, constructed of reeds and rushes, and the papyrus; and he fell into enmity with his brother Usous, who was the inventor of clothing for the body, which he made of the wild beasts which he



could catch. And when there were violent storms of rain and wind, the trees about Tyre being rubbed against each other, took fire, and all the forest in the neighbourhood was consumed. And Usous, having taken a tree, and broken off its boughs, was the first who dared to venture on the sea. And he consecrated two pillars to fire and wind, and worshipped them, and poured out upon them the blood of the wild beasts he took in hunting: and when these men were dead, those that remained consecrated to them rods, and worshipped the pillars, and held anniversary feasts in honour of them."

The Puranas supply merely the names of the persons.

The Phenician annals support the views previously advanced, so far as they relate to the practice of idolatry in these times; in which opinion they are confirmed by Maimonides and other eminent Jewish doctors.

*The sixth generation.*—Here also the scriptures only give us the names of the patriarchs Methusael in the line of Cain, and Jared in that of Seth.

This generation appears to be omitted by Sanchoniatho; and the Puranas give us no information of consequence respecting it.

*The seventh generation.*—Here the scriptures speak of Lamech in the line of Cain, and Enoch in the family of Seth. Respecting each of these we are furnished with interesting and important information. Of Lamech it is said, "And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle. And his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ. And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron: and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah. And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt: if Cain shall be avenged seven-fold, truly Lamech seventy and seven-fold." (Gen. iv. 19—24.)



This paragraph has afforded ample range for criticism ; but our observations must be brief. In the first place, it is obvious that the speech of Lamech is highly poetic. Bishop Lowth pronounces it to be "an indubitable specimen of poetry."\* And another author observes respecting it, that it comprises "a certain number of hemistichs, or broken verses, so artificially disposed as to produce a clear and metrical rhythm, which is to a certain extent conveyed in our authorized translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. It is the earliest specimen of Hebrew poetry extant. How Moses received it, whether from oral tradition or from documentary authority, is a matter of no moment. It is sufficient that he has recorded it ; and the internal evidence which it bears of being an original fragment of antediluvian poetry seems to have satisfied all reasonable inquirers."† And it must ever be regarded as a singular fact, that the man who appears to have addressed his wives under considerable emotion in this measured and poetic language, as far as appears, spontaneously, was the parent of the person who for his knowledge of music, and manufacture or improvement of musical instruments, is said to be the "father of all who handle the harp and organ."

But while we regard these isolated expressions as means intended to give us some knowledge of those early days, and endeavour to elicit from their teaching some definite ideas of the character of the age, it is remarkable that the fact of Lamech having had two wives bears additional testimony to the prevalence of a licentiousness of manners similar, in many respects, to that indicated by our previous observations.

But it may be asked, "What is the meaning of these words ? For what purpose did Lamech speak ? And what was the precise communication which he intended to make to his wives ?" On this subject expositors greatly differ in opinion. It has been supposed that Lamech, having slain a man in his own defence, and his wives having been alarmed

\* LOWTH on Hebrew Poetry, p. 44.

† "Poetry of the Pentateuch," vol. i. p. 8.



lest the kindred of the deceased should seek his life in return, makes this speech to quiet their apprehensions ; in which he endeavours to prove that there was no reason to fear on his account ; for if the slayer of the wilful murderer, Cain, should receive a seven-fold punishment, surely, he who should kill Lamech for having slain a man in self-defence, might expect a seventy-seven-fold punishment. But the subject is very obscure, and the explanation given above is founded on conjecture. It has been observed that the former part of the address should be read interrogatively, which the original will certainly allow. Thus :—

“Have I slain a man, that I should be wounded ?  
Or a young man, that I should be bruised ?”

Dr. Clarke is perhaps correct in placing this text “among those which are inscrutable,” so far as any explicit and authoritative exposition is concerned. But it does, nevertheless, appear to us that a much more *probable* sense of the language may be given. Polygamy existed in the east in a very early age, and has continued to the present time. We have, however, the highest authority for saying that “from the beginning it was not so.” It was the order of God, that there should be male and female, and that “they *twain* should be one flesh.”

“In the beginning God created all sorts of birds, beasts, and other animals, in both genders, to increase in their kind. It is not declared that one pair only was made of each, nor that each animal was created in equal numbers of the respective genders, nor yet that there was the same number of each sort of animal. The affirmative of the second proposition may, however, be inferred. (Gen. vii. 2.) But man was created last, and in a totally different fashion from them. God created one person, a man ; but he created them wonderfully, both male and female in one, in his own image. In the sleep of the man he separated from his body one woman, and he caused them to be man and wife, and he called their name Adam. The first man conversing with his Maker in innocence, was the first prophet also whom



God inspired with a knowledge of the future. He was not yet a father, and knew not, by any means of human judgment, how children would act towards their parents, or how the economy of families would be conducted in ages to come. But thus he sang: 'This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called *Isha*, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh.' The circumstance upon which alone all marriage depends, was one in which polygamy was *impossible*; and that is, a prohibition of nature. But the words of Adam are both a prediction and a law, and in them the intermarriage of his posterity is declared to be a legal reunion of what in the first beginning were naturally one, the man and his one wife. They represent marriage and monogamy as simple synonymes. And so they are."\*

But, as we have seen, in the fifth and sixth generations, when men began to multiply, licentiousness of manners arose; great men violently took beautiful women whom they chose, and sensuality and lust prevailed. In these circumstances, Lamech, led away by this unholy influence, breaks through the limits which Divine Providence had assigned, and takes to himself two wives. This is regarded as an infraction of the Divine law, and he is threatened with punishment. To this his speech affords a reply, and, in fact, urges that, if the person of a murderer was protected, and seven-fold punishment was to fall on any that harmed him, Lamech is safe, since his crime was a much less evil against society than was that of Cain. Whether this explanation be received or not, it certainly harmonizes with all that the scriptures say of Lamech, and establishes a connexion between his character and his words.

The Mosaic narrative gives the name of Enoch as the patriarch in the line of Seth. He was eminently devoted to God, and therefore most of what is said of him will be considered when we come to speak of the religion of this period. Yet,

\* "Nimrod," vol. iv. p. 468.



as it will always be found that direct rebellion against God exerts a fatal influence on the state of society, we may here properly refer to the testimony which revelation bears to the character of the men of this generation. Speaking of wicked persons, Jude says, "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." (Jude 14, 15.) Passing over the other parts of this passage, we observe, that it was one of the characteristics of those times that men not only committed "ungodly deeds," but they also made "hard speeches," against the Most High and his saints. It was not only vice, but infidelity, that prevailed. Men resisted the authority, the revelation, the law, of the Almighty; and not only practically disobeyed but openly spake against God. The tendency of such conduct prepares us for contemplating the fearful issue which was now approaching.

It is worthy of remark, that almost all ancient records allude to the useful and holy life of this patriarch. Eupolemus affirms that the Babylonians believed Enoch to have been the inventor or great promoter of the science of astronomy.\* There is a tradition preserved by Syncellus, to the effect that the tropical year was revealed to him, and others state that he discovered the polar star. The Mahommedans speak of him as having been inspired to write books of prophecy. The following traditions respecting him are preserved by the Arabian historians: "Lud lived nine hundred and sixty-two years, and died in Adár (March): he was succeeded by his son Akhmilk (Enoch), who is the same person as Edris (Instructor) the prophet. The Sabeans believe that he is identical with Hermes, which means 'Utarid (the planet Mercury). God says of him in his book (Koran), 'that he

\* CUMBERLAND'S "Sanchoniatho," p. 227.



exalted him to a high place.' He lived on earth three hundred years or more. He was the first man who sewed with a needle. To him thirty books were revealed."\*

The Ethiopian copy of the apocryphal book of Enoch contains a poem which is prefixed to the body of that work, and which the learned author of "Nimrod" supposes to be authentic. As any composition claiming so early an origin may be regarded as worthy of attention, we give it entire:—

#### SONG OF ENOCH.

THE word of the blessing of Enoch, how he blessed the elect and righteous, who are to be in the day of trouble; rejecting all the wicked and ungodly.

Enoch, a righteous man, who was with God, answered and spoke while his eyes were open, and while he saw a holy vision in the heavens. This the angels showed me.

From them I heard all things, and understood what I saw, (that which shall come to pass, not in this generation, but in a generation which is to follow long afterwards,) on account of the elect.

Upon their account I spoke, and conversed with Him who will go forth from his habitation, the Holy and Mighty One, the God of the world,

Who will hereafter tread upon the mountain Sinai,† appear with his hosts, and be manifested in the strength of his power from heaven.

All shall be afraid, and the watchers be terrified. Great fear and trembling shall seize even to the ends of the earth.

The lofty mountains shall be troubled, and the exalted hills depressed, melting like a honeycomb in the flame.

The earth shall be immersed, and all things which are in it perish; while judgment shall come upon all, even upon all the righteous.

But to them shall He give peace. He shall preserve the elect, and towards them exercise clemency.

\* EL MASUDI'S "Historical Encyclopædia," p. 72.

† It is not improbable that the proper name may have been an explanatory interlineation, which has adhered to the text.



Then shall they all belong to God, and be happy and blessed in the splendour of God. He shall shine upon them.\*

*Behold He comes with ten thousand of his saints to execute judgment upon them, to destroy the wicked, and to reprove all the carnal for every thing which the sinful and ungodly have done and committed against Him.*

All that are in the heavens know what is transacted there. They know that the heavenly luminaries change not their paths, but each rises and sets regularly, every one at its proper period, without transgressing the commands.

They behold the earth, and understand what is there transacted, from the beginning to the end of it.

They see that every working of God is invariable in the period of its appearance ; they behold summer and winter ; that the whole earth is full of water ; that the cloud, the dew, and the rain refresh it.

They consider and behold every tree, how it appears to wither, and every leaf to fall off, except of fourteen trees, which are not deciduous, which wait from the old to the new leaf for two or three winters.

Again they consider the days of summer, that the sun is upon it at its very beginning, while you seek for a covered and shady spot on account of the burning sun, while the earth is scorched up with fervid heat, and you cannot walk either upon the ground or upon the rocks, because of the heat.

They consider how the trees, when they put forth their green leaves, become covered, and produce fruit, understanding every thing, and knowing He who lives for ever does all these things for you ;

That the works at the beginning of every existing year, that all his works, are subservient to Him, and invariable ; yet as God has appointed, so are all things brought to pass.

They see, too, how the seas and rivers together complete their respective operations.

You endure not patiently, nor fulfil the commandments

\* *Lucescet eis.*—*Vers.* SILVESTRE DE SACY.



of the Lord ; but you transgress, and calumniate his greatness, and malignant are the words in your polluted mouths against his majesty.

Ye withered in heart, no peace shall be to you. Therefore your days shall you curse, and the years of your lives shall perish. Perpetual cursing shall be multiplied, and you shall not obtain mercy.

In those days shall you resign your peace, with the eternal malediction of all the righteous ; and the sinners shall perpetually curse you, shall curse you with the ungodly.

The elect shall possess light, joy, and peace, and they shall inherit the earth ; but you, the unholy, shall be accursed.

Then shall wisdom be given to the elect, all of whom shall live, and not again transgress by impiety and pride ; but shall humble themselves, having prudence, and shall not repeat transgression.

They shall not be condemned the whole period of their lives, nor die in torment and indignation ; but the sum of their days shall be completed, and they shall grow old in peace, while the years of their happiness shall be multiplied with joy and peace for ever, all the time of their existence.\*

The Puranas furnish us with nothing of importance respecting this generation. The account of Dhruva supplied by this record in the second generation is misplaced, and refers to the character of Enoch. His distinguished piety, his translation, the legend of his being raised to shine in the polar star, taken in connexion with his great wisdom and learning, clearly serve to identify the two characters. And it is remarkable that the patriarch who, in the Mosaic line, corresponds with Dhruva, was called Enos, a name so closely resembling Enoch, that, in traditionary memorials, the one might easily be substituted for the other.

In this generation we are brought into connexion with another means of information. Berosus has given us, from the Chaldean records, a list of antediluvian kings. These

\* "Nimrod," vol. iv. p. 86.



are found in the fourth column of the Comparative Table. According to the chronology of Hales, Alorus, the first sovereign, began to govern in the year of the world 1062.\* It is a curious circumstance that the Paschal Chronicle "relates that the first Chaldean kings mentioned by Berosus were the giants, who are called 'mighty men,' and 'men of renown.' (Gen. vi. 4.)" †

Whether this be strictly correct or not, it will be regarded as a singular fact, that, while the scriptures only obscurely allude to the existence of mighty men, and intimate in general terms that about this time wickedness and violence began to prevail, fragments preserved among the national records of the kingdom founded by Nimrod should fix on this very time as the period when kings began to reign. It is further worthy of notice, that this is supposed to have taken place within about a century after the death of Adam. We might reasonably suppose that, during the lifetime of the great progenitor of mankind, he would exercise considerable influence among his posterity; and nothing appears more reasonable than that, soon after his death, violent and ambitious men would, when released from the constraint of his influence, carry out their wicked designs. It is added, that "Alorus gave out a report that God had appointed him to be the shepherd of his people." ‡

There is another piece of curious information in the record of Berosus. He says: "There appeared, from that

\* There has been much discussion respecting these dates, as Berosus computes the time by *sari*; respecting which the elucidation of Hales has been generally received. "The term *saros*, or *sar*, stripped of its Greek termination, is evidently derived from the Hebrew עשר *asar*, or Chaldee עשרא *asara*, 'ten,' by elision; and in Syriac סר *Hhad sar*, signifies *un-decim*, or 'eleven,' by a similar elision of the Hebrew אהדא *ahhad*." (HALES'S "Chronology," vol. iv. p. 8.) In confirmation of this opinion it is alleged that, according to Polyhistor and the Egyptian chronologers Annianus and Panodorus, the *saros* consisted of three thousand six hundred days, which is the amount of ten Chaldean years of three hundred and sixty days each.

† JACKSON'S "Chronological Antiquities," vol. i. p. 204. The word used in the text referred to is *nephilim*, from *nephal*, "he fell;" and it is therefore probable that the persons referred to were mighty men remarkable for wickedness.

‡ CORY'S "Fragments," p. 32.



part of the Erythræan Sea which borders upon Babylonia, an *intelligent animal*,\* by name Oannes, whose whole body (according to the account of Apollodorus) was that of a fish ; that, under the fish's head, he had another head, with feet also below, similar to those of a man, subjoined to the fish's tail. His voice, too, and language was articulate and human ; and a representation of him is preserved to this day.

“This being was accustomed to pass the day among men, but took no food at that season ; and he gave them an insight into letters and sciences, and arts of every kind. He taught them to construct cities, to found temples, to compile laws ; and explained to them the principles of geometrical knowledge. He made them distinguish the seeds of the earth, and showed them how to collect the fruits ; in short, he instructed them in every thing which could tend to soften their manners and humanize their lives. From that time, nothing material has been added by way of improvement to his instructions. And when the sun had set, this being, Oannes, retired again into the sea, and passed the night in the deep ; for he was amphibious. Moreover, Oannes wrote concerning the generations of mankind, and of their civil polity.”†

It does not appear certain when this circumstance happened. Berosus, as quoted by Alexander Polyhistor, says, it occurred in the first year of the reign of Alorus. But Apollodorus, quoting the same author, states that it was in the reign of Ammenon the fourth king, who began to govern one hundred and sixty years after the death of Alorus ; while Abydenus, professing to follow the same authority, says that, under the government of Amillarus the third king, a second Annedotus or sea-demon came up from the sea who *was very similar in form to Oannes*. From all this it is probable, that Polyhistor is correct. It is, however, not so easy to ascertain the precise meaning of this fable. Some may be disposed to ridicule

\* See JACKSON'S emendation, in his “Chronological Antiquities,” vol. i. p. 208 ; and HALES'S “Analysis,” vol. iv. p. 10.

† CORY'S “Fragments,” p. 23.



any serious notice of it ; but we are persuaded that it is vain to endeavour to understand the origin of nations, or the true character of mankind in the early ages, if we despise and neglect the information to be derived from the figurative language and the fabulous narrations under which it is mostly shrouded.

Helladius, in endeavouring to explain this riddle, says, that Oannes "was really a man, and only appeared to be a fish, because he was clothed with a fish's skin." Dr. Hales thinks that this fable was intended to refer to the character of Enoch and his prophecy ; and he founds his opinion mainly on the similarity of names ; the name Oannes being occasionally written Euahanes, which bears some resemblance to Hanoah. We doubt the soundness of this opinion. In attempting to explain this subject, it must be kept in mind that Berossus wrote his annals from "written accounts," his descriptions from "preserved delineations in the temple of Belus at Babylon." We think this explains the entire subject ; for, before the time of Berossus, fable and allegory had become extensively incorporated into the corrupted and idolatrous religion of Chaldea. And although the inconsistent imagery adopted may have become obsolete, and its purport difficult to be understood, it may nevertheless suggest certain general principles, or facts, with satisfactory clearness. In the case before us, we have evidently the prototype of that which was afterward worshipped in different countries, and under different names, as a deity, half man and half fish. Such was the Dagon of the Philistines, from *dag*, "a fish." The Egyptians worshipped a deity in the same form. Sidon or Saidon is a name of similar import ; and it is alleged that the Hindu Vishnu is a similar deity under another name.\*

Scarcely a doubt, therefore, can exist that in this antediluvian period some person eminent for talents, and distinguished for the communication of useful knowledge, appeared ; that he was in some way connected with the sea, or with the impartation of knowledge respecting it ; and was, there-

BRYANT'S "Analysis," vol. iii. p. 134 ; vol. v. p. 236.



fore, in the times of corruption and idolatry which followed, worshipped as a sea-deity. It thus naturally followed that, as his figure had become perverted according to idolatrous usage, Berosus, while recording the facts of his history, presents us with his fabulous form and manner of life.

*The eighth generation.*—Here Moses records the name of Methuselah in the line of Seth. He lived nine hundred and sixty-nine years, having attained the longest mortal existence on record. In the family of Cain, Jabel, Jubal, and Tubal-cain are all celebrated as eminent in their several pursuits.

Jabal is said to have chosen a nomadic life, and to have been “the father of such as dwell in tents;” (Gen. iv. 20;) a proof that this was not the primitive manner of life; Cain, who was driven away from the society of his former friends, “builded a city.” (Verse 17.) It appears, therefore, if men had at all lived in tents and devoted themselves to the wandering life of herdsmen before the time of Jabel, that he carried out this manner of life to a greater extent than had been previously done.

Jubal turned his attention to music, and is called “the father of all such as handle the harp and organ.” (Verse 21.) Poetry, we know, had been previously cultivated, and music might also have been practised. It is certain, however, that the latter interesting art was in use during this generation; both wind and stringed instruments having been then invented.

Tubal-cain was another son of Lamech. He was “an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron.” (Verse 22.) Here also, it is clear, invention cannot be intended. Some knowledge of the working of metals must have been previously obtained. Extensive agricultural operations could not have been carried on, cities could not have been built, the useful and elegant arts could not have been brought into use, without this knowledge. There is, therefore, reason for believing that Tubal-cain, by bending his attention to metallurgy and the useful operative arts connected with it, made great and important discoveries, and threw open to all future labourers in this department a wide field of knowledge and improvement.



But, whatever was the precise nature of the discoveries and improvements introduced by this individual, it is undoubted that they made him celebrated in his day, and attached honourable distinction to his name in all succeeding generations; almost every ancient nation having preserved some traditional notices of his character and improvements.

Sanchoniatho's account of this generation is as follows:—  
“Of these were begotten two brothers, who discovered iron, and the forging thereof. One of these, called Chrysor, who is the same with Hephæstus, exercised himself in words and charms and divinations: and he invented the hook and the bait, and the fishing-line, and boats of light construction; and he was the first of all men that sailed. Wherefore he was worshipped after his death as a god, under the name of Diamichius. And it is said that his brothers invented the art of building walls with bricks.”

The Puranas afford no information except the names; but these are significant. In the seventh generation the name is Sumarti, a word which means “a fiery meteor;” and in this we have the brothers designated by terms which signify “beating” and “hammering.” It may be observed, in explanation of any apparent discrepancy which a careful observer may discover between the accounts of the different columns of the Comparative Table in respect of the seventh and eighth generations, that it is highly probable these are confounded in some of the accounts. The Mosaic narrative does not give us, in the line of Cain, any figures representing the length of life, or the age of the father at the birth of the eldest son; and hence we have no means of ascertaining to what extent the generations in each family synchronized. Yet, as Cain must have been at least two hundred years old at the birth of Seth, it would not be unlikely for the seventh generation of his descendants to synchronize with the sixth in the family of Seth.

We have no particulars in the records of Berosus of the events which transpired at this time beyond the names of the kings.

The coincidence between the testimony of the several



columns in this generation is remarkable. No one can doubt that Chrysor in the history of Sanchoniatho is identical with the Tubal-cain of Moses ; and it seems equally evident that the Puranas refer to the same personage. An extended investigation of this subject would lead us far beyond our limits : we must therefore be brief.

First, then, it appears that Tubal-cain is the same who was afterwards worshipped by the Greeks and Romans as Vulcan. This is probable from the name, which, by the omission of the *Tu*, and turning the *b* into *v*,—a change frequently made among the Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans,—makes Valcain, or Vulcan. This is confirmed by the sameness of character sustained by the two. Jackson asserts that Hephæstus and Chrysor are, the one a Phenician, and the other a Chaldee, word, and are denominated from “fire.” *Chrys-or* is “an artificer in fire,” and Hephæstus is “the father or inventor of fire ;” which is the known character of Vulcan.\* In proof of this he refers to Bochart and Buxtorf. There is also undoubted reference to the well-known character of Tubal-cain in the appellation Diamichius, which is supposed to be derived from a Hebrew word signifying “the god of engines.” In support of this general view, Banier assures us, that if it be admitted, after Cicero, that there were several Vulcans worshipped by the Greeks and Romans, there was another “Vulcan even more ancient than all these : that is the Tubal-cain of scripture ; who, having applied himself to the forging of iron, as Moses informs us, became the model and original of all the rest.” †

We must not omit here to mention an opinion which has obtained considerable credit among ancient authors ; namely, that Tubal-cain was the first king in the list of Berosus. Jackson labours to show that Chrysor and Alorus are the same name, and were applied to the same person, as Tubal-cain.

It is further probable that this same person was wor-

\* JACKSON'S “Chronological Antiquities,” vol. i. p. 206.

† BANIER'S “Mythology,” vol. ii. p. 354.



shipped by some of the most ancient nations under different names, and invested with various attributes. Alorus seems to be the same with All-or, the god of fire, the name under which the first sovereign was worshipped by the Chaldeans. We have the direct testimony of Sanchoniatho, that Chrysor was worshipped after his death under the name of Diamichius, or "Jupiter the engineer;" while we know that Vulcan was the oldest hero-deity of the ancient Egyptians. It is also generally admitted that, under various names, and connected with various fabulous narratives, the same person became associated with the mythology of Greece and Rome.

With the tradition of Vulcan preserved by the Mahomedan historians, we pass from this generation. "Among the sons of Kabeil, (Cain,) there was one whose name was Tubal, more than all the others addicted to pleasure, in which he permitted himself to indulge to a degree which surpassed all bounds of moderation. It was this sensualist that Eblis (the devil) selected to instruct in the method of expressing the juice of the grape, and of employing it as a grateful and pernicious beverage. The discovery was immediately communicated to his family, who became thus early initiated in the most degrading species of intemperance. Eblis further suggested to Tubal the invention of the barbut, or lute, and other musical instruments, on which he taught them to play; and thus the pleasures of wine and music became the principal occupation of the race of Cain."

*The ninth generation.*—Here early history furnishes scanty information. Moses does not carry his account of the family of Cain beyond the immediate descendants of Lamech; and his notice of Lamech in the line of Seth contains but one circumstance worthy of remark; and that is, the predictive character of the name which he gave to his son Noah.

Sanchoniatho simply observes of the persons of this generation, that they "discovered the method of mingling stubble with the loam of bricks, and of baking them in the sun: they were also the inventors of tiling."

The Puranas afford us no additional knowledge.

*The tenth generation.*—In the history of Sanchoniatho



there is an evident transition from the line of Cain to that of Seth. Agrouerus or Agrotēs is undoubtedly the same as Noah; and this is confirmed by the statement that he is said to be the father of Hamynus, (Ham,) from whom descended Misor, (Misraim,) king of Egypt.

Of Agrouerus it is said, "Of whom in Phenicia there was a statue held in the highest veneration, and a temple drawn by yokes of oxen; and at Byblus he is called, by way of eminence, 'the greatest of the gods.' These added to the houses courts, and porticoes, and crypts: husbandmen and such as hunt with dogs derive their origin from these: they are called also Aletæ and Titans."

The account given by the Puranas is interesting:—Anga, (the representative of the line of Seth in the ninth generation,) being an impious and tyrannical prince, was cursed by the Brahmins; in consequence of which he died without issue. To remedy the evil, they opened his left arm, and with a stick churned the humours, till they at last produced a son, who proved as wicked as his father, and was, of course, set aside. Then, opening his right arm, they churned until they produced a beautiful boy, who proved to be a form of Vishnu under the name of Prithu. Gods and men came to make obeisance unto him, and to celebrate his appearance on earth. He married a form of the goddess Lakshmi. In his time the earth having refused to give her wonted supplies to mankind, Prithu compelled her, by beating and wounding her, which is to be understood of the operation of agricultural instruments: for Prithu was a religious prince, and fond of agriculture, and became a husbandman.

There is another circumstance brought before us in the Puranas, which is worthy of notice. Prithu is represented as having children to the fourth generation. This, which at first seems to place the Hindu record in collision with the Mosaic narrative, may, on further consideration, be found rather to illustrate and confirm it. When we consider that Noah's father was a parent at the age of one hundred and eighty-eight, Methuselah at one hundred and eighty-seven,



Enoch at one hundred and sixty-five, Jared when he was one hundred and sixty-two, and Mahaleel at one hundred and sixty-five, it seems strange that Noah should have been five hundred years old at the birth of his eldest son. We are indeed assured by Moses, that this was his age when he had Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Yet, if he had children before these, who had become partakers of the general corruption, there would have been ample time in the five hundred years for *four* generations of his descendants before the Flood. If this were the case, which does not appear to be improbable, then we might suppose that, as the sons who were preserved with him in the ark were all born after the Flood had been threatened, and while the ark was preparing, they were sent by Providence specially to provide a less corrupted paternity for the postdiluvian world.

We have now noticed most of those fragments of information respecting this period which admit of being placed in consecutive order. There are some other points to be considered, which will help us to obtain a just view of the history of this period. We will briefly notice these, and then subjoin a few general remarks.

One of these has reference to the probable population of the antediluvian world. To write on this subject in a manner that may warrant confidence, is not an easy task, perhaps it is an impossible one. On scarcely any topic have ingenious, and even scientific, authors fallen into such palpable blunders as on this. Their conduct may be accounted for by a reference to their general motives and to their principles of calculation.

With respect to the first, writers have frequently, if not generally, written on population under a strong bias: they have had some partial theory to support, or some particular facts or state of society to account for; and by these their judgment has been influenced. Such was the case with bishop Cumberland and Mr. Malthus, not to mention others. We think the mode of calculation adopted in either case has been productive of an equal amount of error. Bishop Cumberland, for instance, in calculating the increase



of population after the Flood, quietly supposes that every child born shall live forty years at least, and that every young man and woman shall marry when twenty years of age, and shall become the parents of twenty children in the next twenty years; and this is supposed to be universal, not one is allowed to die until this task is accomplished! Malthus equally erred by calculating that mankind was doubled every twenty-five years.

In our judgment, this subject, beyond every other, is inaccessible to the application of any uniform rule. We agree in the remark of an able author, that "the increase of mankind seems to be, in an especial manner, kept by the Almighty under his own immediate sovereign disposal; and so mysteriously, that we cannot calculate, nor even guess at, the probable produce of any marriage, under whatever circumstances of rank, wealth, health, age, or climate. The most healthy of every class in life are very often barren; while we constantly see a numerous offspring from sickly, diseased, and even deformed parents.

"Uncertainty of this kind does not exist as to the lower orders of the creation; as to their increase, we are allowed to calculate and speculate with tolerable exactness.

"This utter uncertainty, as to the very root of population, involves the whole subject, more or less, in its consequences; and, with all our labours and tables, however useful and convenient we may find them for the present purposes of life, no sooner do we attempt to open vistas into futurity, than we find ourselves on ground forbidden to the children of men."\*

In Europe, and more especially in the British Islands, when under favourable circumstances, the following calculations must be near the truth:—

"The annual number of marriages is, to the entire population, varying from 1 to 110 to 1 to 120.

"The average number of births produced by each marriage is about  $4\frac{1}{2}$ , certainly not more.

\* CROSTHWAITE'S "Synchronology," p. 274.



“The average number of deaths is to the entire population nearly as 2 to  $34\frac{1}{2}$ .

“From all the various documents and calculations which I have examined, it appears that in settled states there is an annual increase of about 1 in 100, of course geometrically progressive. This would cause the entire population to double itself in about seventy years; and were this rate of increase to continue, population would increase fourfold in one hundred and forty years, and twenty-five-fold in three hundred and twenty years.”\*

This rapid multiplication of mankind is prodigious, and, if applied to the antediluvian world, would make the population above twelve hundred millions at the time of the Deluge. Yet, great as is this increase, if a superintending Providence should reduce the marriages or births, or increase the deaths by  $\frac{1}{200}$ , it would entirely vanish, and the population be reduced to a stationary position.

From these remarks it will appear, that any attempt to furnish an accurate estimate of the population of the antediluvian world must be utterly futile. Yet, when we take into account the extreme longevity of human life, and the direct command of the Creator to “be fruitful and multiply,”—a command which warrants the belief that corresponding providential blessings were bestowed,—it does not appear unreasonable to suppose that at the time of the Deluge the population of the earth was nearly, if not quite, as great as it is at present.

Another subject which claims a passing notice, is the extreme longevity attributed to the antediluvian patriarchs.

This question respects two particulars,—the length of the year, and the absolute length of life.

With respect to the first point, much ignorant scepticism has obtained, many persons supposing that the years used in these computations were lunar years or months. Now we do not deny that lunar years were occasionally used in ancient computations, and that, by some, even days were

\* CROSTHWAITE'S “Synchronology,” p. 273.



called years. But it is clear that Moses does not use any such chronological elements: his year contained three hundred and sixty days. This is evident from the particular account given us of the Flood: from Noah's reckoning five months, or one hundred and fifty days, from the seventeenth day of the second month to the seventeenth day of the seventh month, as expressing the time of the rising of the waters; and seven months and ten days as the time occupied in the decrease of the waters, and the drying of the ground; and Noah left the ark after a stay in it of three hundred and seventy days from the seventeenth day of the second month in one year, to the twenty-seventh day of the second month in the following year.

This was also the length of the ancient Chaldean year, which continued in use among the Egyptians, Phenicians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, and others. Perhaps one of the best proofs of the use of this measure of time in extreme antiquity is the following: Diodorus Siculus states, that, at the sepulchre of Osiris, the Egyptian priests appointed to bewail his death filled three hundred and sixty milk-bowls every day, to denote the number of days in the primitive Egyptian year used in his reign. He also represents an ancient custom at Acanthe, near Memphis, on the Libyan side of the Nile,—three hundred and sixty priests fetched water every day from the Nile, and poured it into a vessel full of holes, to represent the three hundred and sixty days in continual flux or succession.\*

But, in the absence of this proof, the gradual diminution of the term of life would be in itself a sufficient refutation of this notion. Before the Flood the patriarchs, excepting Enoch, lived from seven hundred and fifty-three to nine hundred and sixty-nine years each; while, after that event, Noah died aged nine hundred and fifty, Shem, six hundred, Arphaxad, four hundred and thirty-eight, Selah, four hundred and thirty-three, Eber, four hundred and four, Peleg,

\* DIODORUS SICULUS, lib. i.



two hundred and thirty-nine, Serug, two hundred and thirty, and Nahor, one hundred and forty-eight. Now, when, in this case, could the alteration be made? Certainly not at the time of the Flood; for Noah and Shem present a length of life as startling as any thing in antediluvian history: while, between their time, and that of Abraham, we have no interval when the transition from a lunar to a solar year could possibly have been made. And surely it will not be supposed that the year gradually diminished! So that, whatever difficulty we may have in accounting for this extreme length of human life, the fullest proof is afforded that it did really and truly exist.

It may, however, be necessary to supply an abstract of the historical evidence which establishes this fact.

Josephus, having stated the length of patriarchal life according to the Mosaic account, adds: "I have, for witnesses to what I have said, all those who have written antiquities, both among the Greeks and Barbarians; for even Manetho, who wrote the Egyptian history, and Berosus, who collected the Chaldean monuments, and Mochus, and Hestæus, and, besides these, Hieronymus the Egyptian, and those who composed the Phenician history, agree to what I here say: Hesiod, also, and Hecataeus, Hellanicus and Acusilaus, and, besides these, Ephorus and Nicolaus, relate that the ancients lived a thousand years."\*

On this passage it is well remarked by a modern author, that "these men either were in possession of tradition relating to this fact, or that they borrowed them from Moses; and, in either case, our purpose is answered. For, if they received them from prevalent traditions, it will be granted that these traditions had originally some foundation in fact, and that they correspond with the sacred history; but if they borrowed them from Moses, two points are gained on our part. It is proved that such a man as Moses did really exist; that his writings were then extant; that

\* JOSEPHUS'S "Antiquities," book i. chap. iii.



they were in substance what they now are, and that they bear an antiquity more remote than these, which are allowed to be the most ancient of the Heathen writers. It is proved, further, that his history was highly esteemed, and that it was supposed by these writers to contain facts. Whether they drew from Moses or from tradition; and whether their testimony sprang from this narration, or from any other source; either way, the Mosaic account of those early ages is corroborated by the oldest fragments of antiquity.”\*

We deem corroborations of this kind specially valuable in these days of scepticism and blasphemy; and therefore add one or two pertinent illustrations to the same effect.

We select a nation, the most remote and the most isolated from Europe and Western Asia, and that is China: we refer to its early annals as presented to our view after the most careful scrutiny by European authors. M. De Guignes obtained the numbers we are about to adduce from an actual inspection of original materials. They are stated by a competent literary authority “to be known as a portion of acknowledged history.” From these annals we collect the duration of the reigns of the Chinese emperors, without any selection, throughout the rule of the first dynasty. We remind the reader that, according to the Septuagint chronology, which we have taken for our guide, Fo-hee, the first of these emperors, began to reign during the latter part of the life-time of Noah. Now it will readily be admitted, that the reign of a sovereign is in any generation just equivalent to the length of time which a son survives his father. In order, therefore, to make a fair comparison of these Chinese annals with the Mosaic narrative, we place the reigns of the Chinese emperors in one column, and a corresponding number of patriarchs from the scripture account in another; and call attention to the result.

\* COLLYER'S "Lectures," quoted in HORNE'S "Introduction," vol. i. p. 148.



| CHINESE EMPERORS.    |           | HEBREW PATRIARCHS.       |           |
|----------------------|-----------|--------------------------|-----------|
|                      | Years.    |                          | Years.    |
| Fo-hee reigned ..... | 115       | Shem survived Noah ..... | 152       |
| Shing-nong .....     | 140       | Arphaxad — Shem .....    | 38        |
| Hoang-tee .....      | 100       | Cainan — Arphaxad ...    | 57        |
| Shao-hao .....       | 84        | Selah — Cainan .....     | 103       |
| Thuen-hio .....      | 72        | Eber — Selah .....       | 101       |
| Ti-ko .....          | 70        | Peleg — Eber .....       | 69        |
| Ti-tchee .....       | 13        | Reu — Peleg .....        | 130       |
| Yao.....             | 102       | Serug — Reu.....         | 123       |
|                      | <hr/> 696 |                          | <hr/> 773 |

From this, it appears, that the aggregate of these eight generations presents a difference of only seventy-seven years; and even this is accounted for by the short reign of Ti-tchee, who lived but thirteen years after his accession. We confidently ask, Can any historical corroboration be more complete? Collusion cannot be suspected: an investigation of the two lists convinces us, from their natural appearance, of their authenticity; and the result, while it confirms the Mosaic account, should teach men to be cautious how they stigmatize these annals as fabulous, on account of what has been called “the extravagant length of the reigns.”

It is further stated that Hoang-tee, who lived in China about seven hundred and thirty years after the Flood, remarked the gradual diminution of the term of human life, and inquired, “How it came to pass that the lives of the ancients were so long, and the life of man so short in the age in which he lived?”\* The Institutes of Menu also state that, in the first age, men lived four hundred years. There is therefore the fullest confirmation afforded to this remarkable feature of the Mosaic history.

It may be expected that we should make some further observations on the giants, who are spoken of in the scripture narrative, and referred to in almost all the profane records.

“Our translators have rendered seven Hebrew words by the one term ‘giants;’ namely,—NEPHILIM, GIBBORIM,

\* JACKSON’S “Chronological Antiquities,” vol. ii. p. 411.



ENACHIM, REPHAIM, EMIM, and ZAN-ZUMMIM ; by which appellatives are probably meant in general persons of great knowledge, piety, courage, wickedness, &c., and not men of enormous stature, as is generally conjectured." \*

The word used in Gen. vi. 4, the only passage of scripture which speaks of giants during this period, is *nephilim*, a term only applied to the persons spoken of here and in Numbers xiii. 33. Referring to the latter text, we find it applied to persons of gigantic stature who had distinguished themselves as warriors. This word *nephilim* comes from *nephal*, "he fell;" although Dr. Lee appears inclined to regard it as equivalent to *gib-bōhi*, the term used in the fourth verse, and translated "mighty men." In either case, or if, as is most likely, both these opinions respecting the term be true, it will be understood to refer to persons who, possessing great strength of body and daring of mind, boldly and recklessly exercised both in flagrant rebellion against the laws of God, and the liberties and rights of their fellow-creatures. Hence they gratified their ambition and their lust, and obtained a name, as great and mighty men. But the words of Moses clearly teach that there were two races, or generations, of these mighty men : first, they who are spoken of in the first verse ; and, secondly, their descendants, noticed in the fourth verse. Now it is a remarkable fact, that ancient history, and every part of Pagan mythology, bear evidence of the existence and warlike prowess of the giants : in some cases they are fabled to war against heaven, and in others to wage fierce rebellion on earth. Yet, although these accounts pervade all ancient history and mythology, nothing appears to be more difficult than to give any rational exposition of their scope and meaning.

Our limits forbid any extended examination of the subject. It will, however, we may presume, be considered a settled fact, that in the postdiluvian world there did exist men of great bulk and strength, who, by violent means, invaded the prero-

\* DR. ADAM CLARKE, on Gen. vi. 4.



gative of God, and the prescribed order of his government, and laboured to subject the world to their absolute and imperious dominion. The Sibylline oracles speak plainly on this subject. Alluding to the life of Noah, they say,—

“No feuds as yet, no deadly fray, arose;  
 For the good sire with providential care  
 Had bound them by an oath, and each well knew  
 That all was done in equity and truth.  
 But soon the man of justice left the world,  
 Matured by time and full of years. He died:  
 And his three sons, the barrier now removed,  
 Rise in defiance of all human ties,  
 Nor heed their plighted faith. To arms they fly,  
 Eager and fierce; and now, their band complete,  
 Cronus and Titan join in horrid fray;  
 Rule the great object, and the world the prize.

This was the first sad overture to blood,  
 When war disclosed its horrid front, and men  
 Inured their hands to slaughter. From that hour  
 The gods wrought evil to the Titan race;  
 They never prospered.” \*

This legend appears to refer to the building of Babel; by which, after the death of Noah, the family of Ham meditated the attainment of supreme dominion, and resisted the Divine command, which is supposed to have enjoined the different tribes to separate to different localities. It has been, however, adapted to various times and circumstances. But on these we shall have to remark hereafter. There was, nevertheless, another and a different kind of war; one which preceded this in point of time, and which was of a still more aggravated character. It is exhibited as a direct rebellion against heaven. At one time we are told of the mutilation of Saturn by his son Jupiter, and a furious rebellion of the son against the father. All these are mixed up with giant tales, and bear, in their wide variety, the common stamp of their superhuman size and ferocity. We know it will be concluded that they refer to postdiluvian times. We are ready to admit this: Moses also was well aware of the real events which called forth these fables; and his language

\* BRYANT'S "Analysis," vol. iv. p. 103.



appears to allude to those subsequent circumstances. "There were," he says, "giants in the earth in *those days*,"—those antediluvian days; and, lest his readers should confound this description with what took place long afterwards of an analogous kind, he proceeds to observe, "And also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown." (Gen. vi. 4.) Three distinct periods of time are alluded to in these words: first, the time in which Moses wrote; secondly, a period which in respect of this time of Moses is called times "of old;" and, lastly, the antediluvian period of which Moses was treating, and which he calls "*those days*." His intention, then, appears to have been to point out distinctly the existence of *nephilim* in the early ages of the world, and their resemblance in character and conduct to those giants which were long afterward notorious for their rebellion against heaven, and the violence and bloodshed which they introduced into the world.

We now proceed to give a rapid sketch of the history of this period, as elicited by the preceding observations.

The earliest generations of our race can afford but few materials for history. The murder of Abel, and banishment of Cain, although events of deep and melancholy interest, could only affect the family of the first man. Yet, even in this early period, we are told that a city was built, and called Enoch, after the name of the son of Cain.

We are not informed of the number of Adam's children, or of his descendants in any of the antediluvian generations.

It will have been observed that, in two particulars, the account of Sanchoniatho differs from the other records to which we have referred. It describes the early generations as in a very low and destitute condition; making, after the existence of entire generations, a discovery of the most simple and necessary arts, such as the use of fire. The entire account is of this character, and is pre-eminently atheistic: it contains no references to God. Creation results from the labouring operations of nature, and man is consequently cast



naked and unprotected on the earth, to find, as best he can, the way to sustenance and improvement. We notice this fact here, that we may call attention to a connexion which will always be found to exist. When God is acknowledged, and his revealed truth sought out and used, the origin and early condition of man will always appear dignified and intellectual; while, on the contrary, when God is forgotten, man is represented as rising from brutal ignorance, and slowly and painfully wending his way through a life of barbarism. So inseparably do just views of God stand connected with a correct knowledge of the early history of man! We may further observe, in passing, that history and experience unite to prove that the scriptural account alone is true. The savage never improves until he comes in contact with civilized man. Left to himself, his race always sinks to deeper degradation and final extinction. This is a rule without exception. If the first race of mankind had been found in this savage condition, without intellectual or cultivated compeers to enlighten or instruct them, how could they rise?

We have stated, in the Introduction, our reasons for believing that man, who in his primitive state was taught to speak, was also, by the same Divine Power, taught to write. Without this art, man has never maintained a truly civilized character; and this, without doubt, was the position which his Creator intended him to sustain.

We see, then, notwithstanding the Fall and the murder of Abel, the rising families of mankind starting on a career of existence intended to be elevated and honourable. Clothing is prepared, houses are built, agricultural operations are carried on. Some persons confined their attention to the keeping of cattle, and were herdsmen; others studied various handicraft arts; whilst the great father still lived to aid and instruct his children. He who had walked with God in Eden, who had held intimate converse with heaven, whose mind as well as body had come forth perfect from the hand of God;—he, although fallen into sin, still possessed knowledge, the result of Divine teaching, and, with all his



experience, was calculated and designed to promote the interests of his posterity, and to carry out the purposes of Divine Providence in their existence.

This was a most peculiar era in the history of the world. Generation after generation increased the aggregate of human life. We cannot, of course, pretend to speak with confidence on so obscure a point; but, putting out of the question cases of violence or accident, it would be reasonable to suppose that the most aged would die first. And, if this were the case, then upwards of nine hundred years passed away before a natural death took place. How much like immortality must human life then have appeared! How few, and far between, the evidences of mortality! How rapid the consequent increase of population! Thus the youthful world rose up into maturity, and families and tribes multiplied on the earth.

We have but few fragments of information respecting these early times. Old traditions attest the cultivation of astronomy, for which pursuit the extreme longevity of man must have afforded immense facilities. But the history of the intellectual efforts of the first generations has perished.

Following the onward roll of time, we reach the seventh and eighth generations, which appear to have been the Augustan age of the antediluvian world. Indian traditions unite with those preserved in the most authentic manner in Chaldea, to attest the truth of the opinions prevalent among the Jews, that Enoch was remarkable for his astronomical knowledge. And not only this, architecture and jurisprudence, mathematics and natural history, had reached such a pitch of excellence, that Berosus, with the Babel records under his eye, and living in no dark age, asserts,—“From that time nothing material has been added by way of improvement.”\* In addition to these scientific attainments, corresponding literary efforts were put forth. Josephus and Berosus both testify that history was studiously cultivated, records and annals diligently compiled, and the teaching of science and philosophy carefully preserved.

\* CORY'S "Fragments," p. 23.



The fine arts were not unknown. Of painting we hear nothing; but we are assured that outline representations were preserved, in the sacred temple at Babylon, of antediluvian figures. Poetry had kindled her fires, and shed her inspiring influence over the hearts of mankind. Music was cultivated, musical instruments made and improved; in short, every kind of evidence which the state of the case admits, is afforded in proof of the cultivated, intellectual, and polished character of this age.

But, as we have seen, licentiousness and wickedness subsequently sprang up in connexion with elegance and luxury. Various indications are given, among the fragmentary traditions relating to this period, of rebellion against God, and the profane assumption of divine names and titles; while it is asserted that idolatry arose, with all its evil influence, to shed its withering curse over the family of man. This is the root of all social and political evil. A rejection of God, an abandonment of his service, an idolatrous substitution of earthly or imaginary creatures on his throne, must, in the very nature of things, induce, in any age, or among any people, degradation and ruin.

In the present case, this was accompanied by other evils. Licentiousness prevailed: the moral dignity of woman was not respected. She was not sought as a help-meet for man. Her loveliness and amiability, her angel power to support the distressed mind, and to minister blessings to man in every circumstance of life, as his partner, as the friend of his bosom, his wife,—were all overlooked, and only served to raise and to fan a base and sensual desire. Under this malign influence, pride and power trampled on order and right, and ravished the daughters of men. Polygamy was introduced, and all its concomitant evils were realized.

This point is specially important, and marks in a peculiar manner the operation of the providential government of God. This irregular association of the sexes, however offensive to our moral sensibilities, does not in itself appear likely to injure the physical or intellectual character of society, or in



any way, directly, to affect the great elements of moral and social life. Yet, wherever it has prevailed, in ancient or in modern times, whether accompanied by the elegancies of refinement, or attended by labour and suffering, it has wrought ruin to the social system of mankind; and the result proves the vile practice to be an infraction of the Divine law, even as plainly as it is declared to be by revealed truth itself. It was so in the period under consideration. The sensual desires of proud and lustful men outraged the purpose and the prescribed will of God, and, like deadly poison, poured in at the fountain-head of life, it ran through every social relation, affecting and perverting all that was elevated and honourable, until at length the world of mankind became entirely corrupt, and "every imagination of the thought of their heart was only evil continually."

In close association with this subject, another evil prevailed. Men, in the pride of their power, trampled at once both on the rights of God and on the rights of man. Casting aside all subjection to his sovereignty, they arrogated to themselves profane titles, rejected his authority, and spake "hard speeches" against his laws; while, on the other hand, they subjected their weaker fellow-men to their will, and tyrannized over those whom they were bound to protect. Thus "the earth was filled with violence," and "the wickedness of man was great in the earth."

We have not data sufficient to show to what an awful extent these several evils prevailed, any farther than they are portrayed in the terrible result; in which they are dreadfully manifest. The anger of God was kindled; and a world, with all its elements of intellect and power, was buried in one common destruction.



## CHAPTER IV.

## THE RELIGION OF THE ANTEDILUVIANS.

INTEREST of the Subject—DOCTRINES AND DUTIES BELIEVED AND PRACTISED BY THE PIOUS PATRIARCHS—Being and Government of God—Fall and Depravity of Man—Promise of a Redeemer—Animal Sacrifice—Case of Cain and Abel—Reality and Perpetuity of a future State—Other Doctrines—DIVINE LAWS ACKNOWLEDGED—Substance of them—Law of the Sabbath—Eating of Animal Food—Intellectual Position and mental Cultivation—Doctrine of Redemption—Possible Origin of Idolatry—Enoch.

WE have already made some observations on the religious character and position of the first human pair; but these have been almost entirely in relation to their primitive condition, the immediate consequences of their fall, or the circumstances connected with their expulsion from Eden. We may occasionally find it necessary to refer to these topics. But our principal object at present is to regard the first man as a fallen being, and the parent of a sinful race, which, gradually multiplying on the earth, became at length so notorious for sin, and so incorrigible in wickedness, that they were all, with the exception of one single family, swept away from the face of the earth. This people stood in some spiritual relation to God: they were favoured with religious privileges, and had received divine laws; they had been brought under the influence of the general economy of redeeming grace; some of them became eminently pious; while, notwithstanding the salutary influence of their example, the great bulk of the people sunk into universal depravity.

This subject must appear to every serious person deeply interesting and important. A thousand inquiries arise in the mind respecting these particulars, and others which they involve; and we feel anxious to investigate, in detail, all the



circumstances and results connected with this first experimental application of redeeming mercy to sinful man.

Inviting and useful as the subject may appear, it is confessedly difficult and obscure. Our data of a strictly religious nature, directly connected with the antediluvian generations, are very limited; and our only means of obtaining the desired information is, to study them in the light which the entire revelation of divine truth affords. This we shall endeavour to do, comparing scripture with scripture, that we may, if possible, obtain a tolerably accurate, if not a perfect and complete, understanding of the subject.

In endeavouring to effect this purpose, it will not be possible for us to proceed consecutively with the Mosaic narrative: the reason already assigned will be sufficient to show that, if we confine ourselves to the statements found in the book of Genesis, we cannot obtain an enlarged and sound view of the religion of the early inhabitants of the world.

We propose, therefore, in the first place, to ascertain, if possible, the character and extent of the religious knowledge possessed during the antediluvian period, by an examination into the doctrines and duties generally received and believed by the religious patriarchs of that age.

We consider the entire period from the Creation to the time of Moses to have been essentially one dispensation. We are aware that direct communications were made by God to Noah, Abraham, and perhaps to others also: the extent and importance of these we shall fully consider, when we come to treat of the times in which these distinguished men lived. But we do not think that the admission of this fact affects the general principle. We simply mean that, throughout this entire period, there were certain religious doctrines revealed by God to be believed by men, certain rites enjoined which stood essentially connected with the acceptable service of God, and certain laws commanded to which implicit obedience was required.

Many persons will be disposed altogether to reject, if not to treat with ridicule, the idea that the inhabitants of the world at this time were favoured with a revelation of the



Divine will. This period is frequently, if not generally, regarded as a time when there was no law, a period prior to that in which it pleased God to make known to the children of men his revealed truth. Without going into any formal proof, we remind the reader that the period immediately under consideration (namely, from the Creation to the Deluge) extended over two thousand two hundred and sixty-two years; that during a great portion of this time the world was very populous; that multitudes of people had in this era risen up into life, and passed away into eternity; and that the Lord invariably acted with this people as if they were well acquainted with his will. He dealt with man in mercy and in judgment, manifesting his favour to the pious, and punishing the sin of the wicked. The transgression of Adam was visited, and the Lord arraigned the conduct of Cain. The mode of treatment adopted in these cases clearly proves that each of the delinquents knew his duty, that both violated a well-known law. Now these cases, as well as those which exhibit the righteousness of Noah, the faith of Abraham, the holiness of Lot, or the general wickedness of the old world, and of the inhabitants of the cities of the plain, all attest that these people stood in some acknowledged relation to God: they knew something of his will, felt they were under some obligations to obey him, and must therefore have had some distinct ideas of what God required of them. This knowledge would refer either to religious doctrines, or to Divine laws.

If these views be just, it will not only appear that the notion which supposes the first revelation of the Divine will to have been made to mankind through Moses is incorrect, but that the common practice of regarding the early ages as ignorant of all religious truth, until it is specifically stated in the Bible, is unwarrantable. Under the influence of this last error, many writers have denied to the early patriarchs that Divine knowledge which is alone compatible with the most remarkable events in history. It must indeed be admitted, that, if some of the most important religious doctrines were ever authoritatively revealed by God to mankind,



the medium, and even the fact, of such revelations are not stated in holy scripture. This is the case with the doctrines of the immortality of the soul, of the existence of angels, and of the influence of the Holy Spirit: all these, and many others, are evidently alluded to, are constantly pre-supposed, and are even regarded as of most essential importance. Yet it cannot be said, that the sacred record contains any enunciation of these doctrines which can be regarded as a primitive revelation of them. It cannot be supposed that the notices and allusions which refer to these subjects in holy scripture are the *media* through which they were originally revealed. It therefore follows that the Holy Spirit in the beginning made mankind well acquainted with these Divine truths; and when, through the prevalence of ungodliness and wickedness, they were in danger of being obliterated from the public mind, he, by renewed revelations, caused them to be committed to writing, in order to re-assert their truth, and confirm and extend their influence in the world. The incidental manner in which some of the most important doctrines are mentioned in the early scriptures, strongly supports this opinion. But the subject can only be satisfactorily discussed by referring to particulars.

I. It appears evident that men from the beginning were acquainted with the being and government of God.

On this point it will not be necessary to give any formal or extended proof. If the Mosaic account of the first pair, and of their immediate descendants, be admitted, no doubt can be entertained that God had distinctly revealed himself to man as the Creator and Governor of this world, and especially of the human family. The law given to our first parents; the manner in which Jehovah entered into judgment with them; their doom, and the promise of a Redeemer; the acceptance of Abel's offering; the expostulation with Cain, and his punishment;—these give the most satisfactory evidence on this subject. And if this knowledge was then revealed, surely it would be perpetuated, at least, for many generations. Hence we find in the speech of Lamech a distinct recognition of this doctrine.



The same is seen in the case of Enoch. The character of his life was not merely that of moral excellence,—we do not read of purity or benevolence or other virtues, although there can be no doubt that he possessed all these; but they did not make up his character; this was formed by his free and uninterrupted communion with his heavenly Father: he walked with God, and the nature of his reward corresponded with the character of his life; for God took him. The history of Noah elucidates the same truth, and shows, in the most clear and convincing manner, that God did take cognizance of human actions, and that man was well acquainted with this truth. The information supplied by the New Testament places the subject beyond all doubt. St. Paul, when speaking of the religion of this very people, says, “Without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” (Heb. xi. 6.) And, in immediate connexion with this declaration, he speaks of the *faith* of Abel, Enoch, and Noah; and asserts that they “died in faith;” showing that they believed not only in the being of God, but also in his gracious government of the world, and his merciful manifestation of blessing to those who “seek him.” And if these patriarchs were favoured with this knowledge, there can be no reason for believing that their contemporaries had not equal means of attaining it. They are not in holy scripture celebrated for their knowledge, but for their obedience and faith.

II. The fall and depravity of man was also known and believed at this period.

A variety of circumstances concur to confirm us in this opinion. Adam himself must have been aware of the great change which sin had produced in his condition. He knew that he was created in the image of God, and had enjoyed, through holy intercourse with him in Paradise, the most perfect happiness; that he had forfeited the Divine likeness, had been cut off from this happy intercourse, expelled from the garden, which was the scene of his primitive felicity, and



cast out into a barren world, doomed to labour, sorrow, and death. Adam and his wife, we repeat, must have known all this, and also the change that had passed upon their moral nature. There is no reason for supposing that their thoughts or feelings were different from those experienced in analogous circumstances by their descendants. We now find that, if a person of exalted piety neglects his duty, cleaves to worldly pleasure, and falls into sin, he becomes painfully conscious of the height from which he has fallen, and of the depth of darkness into which he has plunged himself. Can it then be supposed that our first parents, who had fallen from a much higher state, could have been less conscious of the change which had passed over them? While the subjection of the woman, and the doom of the man, pronounced in awful judgment by Jehovah, were yet ringing in their ears, can it for a moment be imagined that they were unacquainted with the doctrine of the Fall and of human depravity?

It appears equally certain that they communicated this knowledge to their descendants. These indeed had before their eyes sufficient evidence of the fact. There stood the garden; but human feet trod not its soil. The Cherubim, replete as their mission was with mercy, bore, nevertheless, unequivocal evidence to the sin of man. Their appearance attested the fact of the Fall, and exhibited intelligible witness to the altered condition of humanity. And, even in the infancy of the world, the murder of Abel, and the punishment of Cain, must have given an awful support to these truths.

We find the same doctrines distinctly recognised in the address of Jehovah to Noah. "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." (Gen. vi. 5.) This language shows the corrupt nature of man, and implies that his corruption was well known. The whole tenor of the communication proves, that, at this particular period, this impure nature rose in universal rebellion against every counteracting influence, until at length the



Almighty declared, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man;" (verse 3;) and the world was consigned to ruin.

What is here advanced may suffice to establish the fact, that, in the early patriarchal ages, mankind had a knowledge of the Fall, and believed in the universal depravity of human nature.\*

III. From the beginning men believed in a promised Redeemer, and offered animal sacrifices to typify the nature and efficacy of his death.

This is a most important particular, and demands serious attention; but it is one of considerable difficulty. We will take the two parts separately, and first endeavour to prove that they believed in a promised Redeemer.

The promise given by God to our great progenitors,—that the Seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent,—must be first considered. It may be admitted that this was intended to minister a measure of hope to the guilty pair, amid the pain and degradation to which they had subjected themselves: we can form no idea of any other purpose having been designed. It is, indeed, difficult to define with precision the extent to which Adam and Eve understood this promise. But, taken in connexion with these circumstances, and regarded as a part of the great economy of grace, there can exist no reasonable doubt that God by these words intended to give to fallen man some knowledge of a Redeemer. It appears to us, that, in joint reference to this purpose and this promise, Christ is termed "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." If this be admitted, (and we do not see how it can be rejected by any believer in the atonement,) then it would seem that the woman might understand from these words, that her Seed was to suffer some sorrow or pain from the power of the tempter, but that eventually this power should be broken by his instrumentality. As we cannot think that on such an

\* Those who desire to see this subject more fully discussed, may consult MAGEE on the Atonement, vol. ii. p. 59; HOLDEN on the Fall, pp. 300—306; DR. LEE'S "Introduction to Job," pp. 58, 59; and WATSON'S Works, vol. vi. p. 41.



occasion the Divine Being would make an unintelligible or an unimportant communication, a sense fully equal to that just given appears to be necessarily implied in this original promise. Taking into account the previous condition of Adam and Eve, their intercourse with God and acquaintance with his will; and considering their knowledge of the tempter, his subtilty and power; they must have been led to form an exalted opinion of this promised Seed. He was to possess wisdom and strength sufficient to defeat all the machinations of that enemy who had succeeded in seducing man when in his best estate. He was to crush that evil energy that had, at this very moment, so completely triumphed over all human power. They must, therefore, even if not fully informed of the intended association of his Divine Nature with human flesh, or of all the glorious results of his mission, have looked forward, with strong faith and hope, to the interposition of this Redeemer. Hence we find Eve, on the birth of her first-born, exclaiming, "I have gotten a man *the Lord*," or, "from the Lord;" (Gen. iv. 1;) as believing that the promised Seed was then given; or, which is perhaps, after all, more probable, receiving this offspring of her body as a pledge of his future appearance, and as, at least, making a part of what had previously been a subject of faith matter of certainty. As much as this appears evident; while it is probable that other revelations, not recorded, would throw a stronger light upon the subject. The New-Testament illustrations of the faith of Abel, Enoch, and Noah seem to intimate that those patriarchs possessed a much clearer knowledge of the promised Redeemer than any thing we have ventured to record in the preceding observations.

We derive strong corroboration of the opinions advanced, from a general view of the doctrine of atonement. From the moment man became a sinner, he needed pardon; and in every age, however the external circumstances of the dispensations of grace may have varied, there has been no change in the great procuring cause of blessing to fallen man: this has always been the atonement of Christ. If,



therefore, men received salvation, and walked in the beauty of holiness, they must, as they experienced redemption, have had some knowledge of a Redeemer. It is not our province to inquire to what extent final salvation may be granted to persons whose means of spiritual instruction have been limited, and whose religious attainments have been partial and not clearly defined. This does not apply to the case under consideration. It would be difficult to select, from the entire Bible, language descriptive of religious attainment more explicit, or more extensive in its import, than that which applies to some antediluvian patriarchs; except, perhaps, in a few cases which are found in the noon-day glory of apostolic times. This is an undoubted fact. These men had experience of practical godliness, to an extent which has invested their character with everlasting honour even in the pages of revelation; and this is explicitly declared to have been attained through faith, which doubtless had the promised Redeemer for its object: yet, after all this, that it should now be questioned whether these men had any knowledge of this Redeemer, appears to us the most absurd and unreasonable doubt that was ever expressed. In such circumstances, the interrogation of the apostle comes with invincible force: "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" (Rom. x. 14.) If these facts, and the reasonings founded on them, are fairly considered, it will be admitted, that the antediluvian world received the promise of a Redeemer, and understood its import.

This opinion will be further confirmed by what we have now to offer in respect of the origin, nature, and object of animal sacrifice.

This subject has been generally regarded as involving two questions,—the appointment of sacrifice, and its typical relation to the sacrifice of Christ. In our remarks, we shall blend these inquiries into one. If in the early ages the origin of animal sacrifice was merely an effort of the human mind, then its typical character seems placed entirely out of the question; while, if it was divinely appointed, it seems almost impossible to doubt that from the beginning it



sustained the same character with which it was unquestionably invested under the Mosaic institution.

This subject is one of great importance. It affects the whole character of patriarchal religion, and is, in fact, the centre of its entire economy. We are anxious to proceed with great caution. The process must necessarily be one of induction. We have no explicit statement of the origin of sacrifice in holy scripture: we must therefore gather our information from admitted facts. We collect a few of the most prominent for our guidance.

1. In the full and perfect dispensation of the gospel, the great procuring cause of all blessing is set forth as a sacrifice,—the sacrifice of Christ. He is the Lamb of God that beareth away the sin of the world. There is redemption; but it is “through his blood.” (Eph. i. 7.) There is pardon; but it is because “He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” (1 John ii. 2.) It is therefore evident, that the grand basis of the economy of grace is vicarious sacrifice. This is the distinguishing element of the religion of the New Testament.

2. This sacrifice of the Saviour was not limited in its influence to persons living after the advent of Christ: it had a retrospective effect. It was he “of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write.” (John i. 45.) Hence Christ is exhibited as “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” (Rev. xiii. 8.) And all salvation in antecedent times is said to have been by *faith*; not centering in the mere animal offering: “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.” (Heb. x. 4.) But Christ by “the grace of God tasted death for every man,” and “by his own blood he entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.” (Heb. ii. 9; ix. 12.) And therefore Moses is said to have “esteemed the reproach of Christ,” and Abraham to have “seen the day of Christ,” and Noah, Enoch, and Abel to have “lived and died in faith.”

3. This anticipatory effect of Christ’s death was not, under the Mosaic dispensation, exhibited to the Jews by



verbal description, but by intelligible rites. The principal of these was sacrifice. This was "a shadow of good things to come." By this means an expiation was made for sin. Not indeed meritoriously efficacious, but clearly typical of that which should afterward be offered by the Saviour, and which alone was efficacious.

4. We find that sacrifice as a rite was not commanded under the law, but was introduced into that dispensation from the patriarchal economy. It is further seen that animal sacrifices were offered by the patriarchs, and obtained Divine acceptance : such were those of Job, Noah, and Abel.

What, then, do we learn from these facts ? Can it for a moment be supposed, that a rite which in itself must be allowed to be repugnant to human reason, but which at the same time involved that great principle of vicarious atonement which distinguishes the gospel of Christ, and which, as typical of his sacrifice, was made so prominent in the Levitical ritual,—can it be supposed that, in the infancy of the world, the invention or introduction of this is to be attributed to the waywardness of the human mind, or the sagacity of the human intellect ? Can we bring ourselves to think that, in those remote ages, when Christ and his sacrifice were, if known at all, "seen through a glass darkly,"—that then man should of himself have excogitated a process so appropriate in itself, and so accurately involving the principle of atonement, that God should in the second generation have met its observance with his special approval, and have afterwards introduced it into that economy which was particularly ordered and arranged by himself ? If this were so, is it not the greatest mystery, the most unnatural and unexpected occurrence, which the scriptures contain ? Rather, does not this brief view of the subject show that sacrifice must have been of Divine appointment ?

It may be said, that it is hasty and unsound to decide a point of such moment from a general view of the subject ; and it may be expected that we should notice some of the cases in which sacrifice is prominently set forth during this period. We will do so. No instance can be referred to



more appropriate to our inquiry than the case of Cain and Abel. We give the authorized translation of the account :—  
“And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.” (Gen. iv. 3—7.)

It will be seen, from a careful reading of this passage, that there is much obscurity thrown over its entire scope by the language used in one or two particular parts. The phrase, “Sin lieth at the door,” is one of these, and, in the connexion in which it is placed, is peculiar. The sense generally attached to these words is, that the guilt or punishment of sin, arising from his misconduct, was ready to meet him with its infliction of punishment, and, as it were, lay at his door for that purpose. This interpretation comes to us with the plausible recommendation, that it is sanctioned by English idiom, it being customary with us, when speaking of threatened punishment, to say that “his sin,” or “the guilt of his sin, lies at his door.”

Still it must be admitted, that, taking the words in this sense, they convey a very common-place sentiment, and one which does not appear to be at all in unison with the preceding words. Cain felt great anger at the rejection of his offering, and the Almighty condescends to expostulate with him, and asks why he is wroth; adding, that if he does well, he shall be accepted; but (according to this sense) if he does not well, that the guilt of his sin, and its consequent punishment, lie at the door, ready to seize him. Is this consistent? Does it seem intended to meet the case of Cain, to assuage his wrath, or inform his mind?

But there is another objection to this version of the pas-



sage, in the words which immediately follow those on which we have remarked : “ And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.” What can this mean? Unto whom do these words refer? It has been supposed that they were intended to apply to Abel, on the ground that, his offering having been accepted, he would take the precedence of his elder brother, and that the Almighty meant to assure Cain that this apprehension was groundless, that Abel was willing to allow him all the rights of primogeniture, and that, as the elder, he should have the dominion over his brother. But it will be seen that this construction is forced and unnatural. In the first place, it is based entirely on a gratuitous and conjectural hypothesis : there is nothing in the words to render an allusion to Abel at all probable : it is not likely that any rights of primogeniture gave Cain a right to govern his brother. The distinctions of birthright, as it existed in patriarchal times, were chiefly religious, and tended to constitute the elder a priest to the family. Yet this was not the case in this instance ; each brother came with his own offering, and therefore it is extremely improbable that if Cain had brought a sacrifice as acceptable as that of Abel, the latter would have been subjected to the former. And again : If this reading were probable in itself, it would be very doubtful, as being deficient in authority. The Almighty had not mentioned Abel ; and therefore the application of the pronouns *his* and *him* to the younger brother is altogether unwarrantable.

These difficulties compel us to enter into a careful examination of the original text, that we may, if possible, elicit a more satisfactory meaning.

We first call attention to the Hebrew word *ghāt-tāh'*, which in the authorized version of the passage is rendered “ sin ;” and which the connexion of the text requires us to understand, “ the guilt, or punishment, of sin.” The question is, whether this latter sense of the term be admissible. It should be observed, that there are in Hebrew two words which are used to signify “ sin,” חַטָּאת and עֲוֹן. These words, in their primary sense, very nearly agree ; but a sin-



gular difference or divergence of meaning is apparent in the developement of their common secondary ideal sense.

The word חַטָּאת *ghat-tāhth'*, in its primary sense, denotes "sin;" in its secondary ideal sense, "something for sin:" while גֹּחַל *gah-vohn*, in its primary sense, denotes "iniquity;" and, analogously, in its secondary ideal sense, "something for iniquity." Yet, in the practical application of these terms, the singular difference to which we have referred occurs. The word *gāh-tāhth'*, in the developement of its secondary ideal sense, *never* denotes "punishment for sin;" but *always* denotes "an offering for sin:" while the word *gah-vohn*, in the developement of its strictly identical secondary ideal sense, *never* denotes "an offering for iniquity;" and *always* denotes "punishment for iniquity." \*

In corroboration of this statement, we have examined three hundred and forty-two passages in the Old Testament, in which the former of these words occurs. In the great majority of those cases it is translated "sin;" in one hundred and ten places it is rendered "an offering for sin;" and in but three of them is there any reference to the punishment of sin. In respect to each of these, Mr. Faber has satisfactorily shown that the translation is defective.

This will be received as a striking confirmation of the opinions advanced with respect to the secondary meaning of the term. If this be correct, the language of that part of the text will be as follows: "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, a sin-offering coucheth at the door." This translation was first proposed by the eminent Lightfoot, and has since received the countenance of the most celebrated Hebrew scholars of this and other countries.† It is taken for granted, that its strict grammatical or mechanical propriety will not be disputed; and, more than this, it supplies a clear and consistent sense to the entire scope of the text. The Almighty was expostulating with Cain on his anger at the rejection of his offering, while his brother Abel's was accepted. It will

\* See FABER'S "Primitive Sacrifice," sect. iii. p. 111, *note*.

† Idem, sect. iii. pp. 96—101.



be remembered that Abel had offered an animal sacrifice, and Cain had not; and the sense of the language used on the occasion appears to be this: “‘Why art thou wroth, and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well,’—that is, if thou canst certainly approach God as a sinless and innocent man,—thou mayest, as such, come with a thank-offering; and ‘shalt thou not be accepted?’ Thou certainly shalt, and experience the Divine favour. But if this is not thy character, if thou art not an innocent, but a guilty, man; not one who has done well, but a sinner; ‘if thou doest not well,’ then this manner of approach is not suitable to thy condition, nor acceptable to God. He hath appointed another mode for sinners to come into his presence, founded on the principle, that without shedding of blood is no remission for sin; and therefore, if this is thy character, ‘a sin-offering lieth couching at the door: unto thee is its desire, and thou mayest rule over it;’ there is no difficulty: thou canst come, as thy brother did, with an offering of blood, and thou also shalt find acceptance.” Thus a clear and consistent sense is given to the entire passage; it is freed from tautology and ambiguity; and the text is worthy of the Infinite and Eternal Speaker.

Much might be added in confirmation of the rendering thus given to this important text; \* but our limits forbid further enlargement. We therefore simply remark, that, as it is impossible that the term in this passage can mean “sin,” so it must imply “a sin-offering.” We therefore assume that a satisfactory version of the passage is found in the emendation of Lightfoot, and in this opinion we think most of our readers will concur.

If we have thus far pursued this inquiry with success, we shall have done much to cast light on a subject of great importance with respect to the history and religion of the patriarchal age,—the origin and intention of animal sacrifice. For,

\* Those who wish to pursue a more extended inquiry, will find further information in FABER’S “Primitive Sacrifice,” sect. iii. chap. 1; “Essay for a new Translation,” pp. 100—102; DR. MAGEE On Atonement and Sacrifice, vol. i. pp. 52—54, and Nos. lxi.—lxiii. lxxv.



if the sense we have put on the language addressed to Cain be the correct one, then, although it does not command Cain to offer an animal victim, it amounts to such a recommendation of the practice as could only be addressed to one acquainted with such a command. Thus we find that a careful inquiry into the scripture account of the first recorded act of animal sacrifice tends to confirm the impressions which were elicited from a general view of the subject; and which are further corroborated by referring to the terms in which this subject is spoken of in the New Testament.

“The acknowledgment of the Supreme Being, and of his universal dominion, was no less strong in the offering of the fruits of the earth by Cain, than in that of the firstlings of the flock by Abel; the intrinsic efficacy of the gift must have been the same in each, each giving of the best that he possessed; the expression of gratitude equally significant and forcible in both. How, then, is the difference to be explained? If we look to the writer of the Hebrews, he informs us that the ground on which Abel’s oblation was preferred to that of Cain was, that Abel offered his in faith; and the criterion of this faith also appears to have been, in the opinion of this writer, the animal sacrifice. The words are remarkable: ‘By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts.’ The words here translated ‘a more excellent sacrifice,’ are in an early version rendered, ‘a much more sacrifice;’ which phrase, though uncouth in form, adequately conveys the original. The meaning, then, is, that by faith Abel offered that which was much more of the true nature of sacrifice than what had been offered by Cain. Abel, consequently, was directed by faith; and this faith was manifested in the nature of his offering. What, then, are we to infer? Without some revelation granted, some assurance held out as an object of faith, Abel could not have exercised this virtue; and without some peculiar mode of sacrifice enjoined, he could not have exemplified this faith by an appropriate



offering. The offering made, we have already seen, was that of an animal. Let us see whether this could have a connexion with any Divine assurance communicated at that early day.

“It is obvious that the promise made to our first parents conveyed an intimation of some future deliverer, who should overcome the tempter that had drawn man from his innocence, and remove those evils that had been occasioned by the Fall. This assurance, without which, or some other ground of hope, it seems difficult to conceive how the principle of religion could have had place among men, became to our first parents the grand object of faith. To perpetuate this fundamental article of religious belief among the descendants of Adam, some striking memorial of the fall of man, and of the promised deliverance, would naturally be appointed. And, if we admit that the scheme of redemption by the death of the only-begotten Son of God was determined from the beginning; that is, if we admit that when God had ordained the deliverance of man, he had ordained the means; if we admit, that Christ was ‘the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world;’ what memorial could be devised more apposite than that of animal sacrifice? exemplifying, by the slaying of the victim, the death which had been denounced against man’s disobedience; and exhibiting the awful lesson of that death which was the wages of sin, and at the same time representing that death which was actually to be undergone by the Redeemer of mankind; and thereby connecting in one view the two great cardinal events in the history of man,—the FALL and the RECOVERY; the death denounced against sin, and the death appointed for that Holy One, who was to lay down his life to recover man from the consequences of sin. The institution of animal sacrifice seems, then, to have been peculiarly significant, as containing all the elements of religious knowledge; and the adoption of this rite, with sincere and pious feelings, would at the same time imply an humble sense of the unworthiness of the offerers; a confession that death, which was inflicted on the victim, was the



desert of those sins which had arisen from man's transgression ; and a full reliance upon the promises of deliverance, joined to an acquiescence in the means appointed for its accomplishment.

“If this view of the matter be just, there is nothing improbable even in the supposition, that that part of the signification of the rite which related to the sacrifice of Christ might have been, in some degree, made known from the beginning. But, not to contend for this, (scripture having furnished no express foundation for the assumption,) room for the exercise of faith is equally preserved, on the idea that animal sacrifice was enjoined, in the general, as the religious sign of faith in the promise of redemption, without any intimation of the way in which it became a sign. Agreeably to these principles, we shall find but little difficulty in determining on what ground it was that Abel's offering was accepted, whilst that of Cain was rejected. Abel, in firm reliance on the promise of God, and in obedience to his command, offered that sacrifice which had been enjoined as the religious expression of his faith ; whilst Cain, disregarding the gracious assurances that had been vouchsafed, or at least disdaining to adopt the prescribed mode of manifesting his belief, possibly as not appearing to his reason to possess any efficacy or natural fitness, thought he had sufficiently acquitted himself of his duty in acknowledging the general superintendence of God, and expressing his gratitude to the Supreme Benefactor, by presenting some of those good things \* which he thereby confessed to have been derived from his bounty. In short, Cain, the first-born of the Fall, exhibits the first-fruits of his parents' dis-

\* I cannot refrain from inserting here a marginal note which I find in my copy of FABER's "Pagan Idolatry," by an unknown hand ; but which is evidently written by a man of learning and religion. Referring to a sentiment similar to that in the text, the writer says, "I think so : I feel sure that the reason why Cain's sacrifice was not accepted was because he did not shed the blood of a live creature in sign of his belief that an atonement was necessary ; whereas Abel brought a lamb, as typical of the already-promised Redeemer. Cain, the first infidel and murderer on record, brought his carrots and turnips, and said they would *do*."



obedience, in the arrogance and self-sufficiency of reason rejecting the aids of revelation, because they fall not within *its* apprehension of right. He takes the first place in the annals of Deism, and displays, in his proud rejection of the ordinance of sacrifice, the same spirit which, in later days, has actuated his *enlightened* followers, in rejecting the sacrifice of Christ.

“What, then, is the result of the foregoing reflections? The sacrifice of Abel was an animal sacrifice. This sacrifice was accepted. The ground of this acceptance was the faith in which it was offered. Scripture assigns no other object of this faith, than the promise of a Redeemer; and of this faith, the offering of an animal in sacrifice appears to have been the legitimate, and consequently the instituted, expression. The institution of animal sacrifice, then, was co-eval with the Fall, and had reference to the sacrifice of our redemption. But, as it had also an immediate and most apposite application to that important event in the condition of man, which, as being the occasion of, was essentially connected with, the work of redemption, *that*, likewise, we have reason to think, was included in its signification. And thus, upon the whole, sacrifice appears to have been ordained as a standing memorial of the death introduced by sin, and of that death which was to be suffered by the Redeemer.” \*

This conclusion appears to be the certain result of an attention to any great principle of revealed truth, and the application of it to the case of the religious condition of the first human family. It is equally clear that if this opinion be rejected, the early generations of the world must be regarded as severed from the economy of grace, and their religious condition as wrapped in impenetrable darkness. We therefore consider the Divine institution of sacrifice immediately after the Fall as sufficiently proved.

Circumstances already mentioned unite to illustrate this opinion. We have seen that cherubim were placed at the east of Paradise; and have been led to conclude, from a consideration of the language used in several parts of scrip-

\* DR. MAGEE on Atonement and Sacrifice, vol. i. pp. 47—55.



ture, that they were in some peculiar way connected with the general scheme of redemption, and stood especially related to the appointed manner of an acceptable approach to the presence of God.

We only ask that these remarks may be taken in connexion with what has been written in a preceding chapter respecting the cherubim ; and, we think, these two subjects will thus be found greatly to illustrate and confirm each other. Our inquiries into the subject of the Edenic cherubim led us to the conclusion that they were designed in some striking manner to exhibit a way of access to the Divine presence ; that, in fact, they held a position strikingly analogous to those afterwards placed in the Jewish tabernacle. Our investigation of the subject of sacrifice has convinced us, that it was divinely appointed soon (if not immediately) after the Fall. What, then, appears more probable than that these were associated ? that the place of sacrifice was before the cherubim ? This conjecture acquires probability from the fact, that there was a locality regarded as, and even called, the place or presence of the Lord. Cain and Abel are said to have “brought” their offerings “unto the Lord ;” and a part of the punishment of Cain was, that he should be exiled from the “face” of the Lord ; and he consequently “went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.” (Gen. iv. 3, 14, 16.) Taking these circumstances together, we are led to believe, that immediately after the Fall the cherubim and the *infolding fire* were placed in Eden, as exhibiting a residence of the Divine Mercy : “*He inhabited or dwelt between the cherubim ;*” and that in this place also sacrifices were commanded to be offered, as an acknowledgment of the consequences of the Fall, and an expression of faith in the promised Saviour.

Whether these opinions be correct or not, we are convinced that enough has been said to show that the first generations of mankind believed in the promised Redeemer, and offered animal sacrifices with direct reference to the character and efficacy of his death.



IV. The reality and perpetuity of a future state of existence were also known and received at that period.

What has been already advanced with respect to other religious doctrines, will, if received in a careful and candid spirit, prepare the mind for admitting the knowledge of this. The direct proof from holy scripture may indeed be less than we should desire; yet this deficiency is easily accounted for in the way which has been already suggested,—that the scriptures do not contain all the revelations respecting religious doctrine and duty, which were made to the early generations of mankind. On this point, we are glad to find that our views are confirmed by an eminent living author, whose judgment on such a subject will be generally deemed conclusive. “The doctrine of a future state,” says the Rev. Thomas Hartwell Horne, “which was held by the patriarchs, (though not explicitly taught by Moses, whose writings pre-suppose it as a generally-adopted article of religion,) was transmitted from them to the Israelites.”\* This is undoubtedly the real fact of the case; and it comes to every impartial and religious mind with so much cogency and power, that we should be content to leave it, without any further evidence, to produce its own effect. But as several talented modern writers have followed in the steps of Warburton, maintaining that, prior to, and even under, the Mosaic dispensation, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul was unknown, we think it right to dwell further on this subject.

To the Mosaic account of the Creation, the Fall, and the expulsion from Paradise, which have been severally considered, (Gen. i. 26, 27; ii. 7—9, 15—17; iii. 14, 15, 17, 19,) special attention is called, as being of great consequence in the contemplation of this subject. And “from the entire of this account it seems clearly deducible, that man, by his original constitution, was destined for immortality, without which all the preceding endowments, however exalted and splendid,

\* “Introduction to a critical Study of the Scriptures,” vol. i. p. 342.



would have been so transient and ineffectual, so vainly and unworthily bestowed. When of all animated beings, it is asserted of man alone, that God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and that man became a living soul ; we cannot much dissent from those commentators who conceive the breath of life thus immediately derived from God partook of the immortality of its Divine Author, and that the living soul which man thus acquired deserved that title much more eminently than the animating principle of any of the brute creation, all of which are described as formed with such different views, and sharing so inferior a degree of their Creator's favour. And, finally, to prove clearly that man was intended for immortality, we are told that the tree of life was placed in the midst of the garden, whose efficacy was such, that if man was permitted to take of it, he would live for ever. Can it be denied that these passages suggest some intelligible hint of immortal life, some idea at least of the capacity of the human soul to enjoy an eternal existence ?

“ It will be said, that all this relates to the state of man before his Fall ; but by this fatal transgression the hope of immortality was totally cut off, and eternal death was the melancholy doom which every human being must look to as the close of his existence. Now, to me, the sacred narrative seems to imply the very contrary conclusion ; and to hold out to penitent man the hope, that, notwithstanding his privilege of enjoying eternal life in this present world was withdrawn, he yet might hope for the continuance or the renewal of his existence in another state. It may be remarked, that the very words of the curse denounced against him by his offended God, in which, if any where, this awful doom would be declared, seem not at all to convey it. Man had been described originally consisting of two distinct parts ; he was ‘ formed of the dust of the earth,’ and ‘ God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.’ Now, to the former part, and to the former part alone, does the letter of the curse confine itself. ‘ In the sweat of thy face,’ says the Divine Judge, to fallen Adam, ‘ shalt thou eat



bread, till thou return unto the ground ; for out of it wast thou taken : for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.' Here the dissolution of the bodily frame, and its return to its original dust, is the only thing menaced. The extinction of that breath of life which God had inspired, the destruction of that living soul which man had been described as possessing, is not so much as hinted at.

“ But if, from the letter, we direct our attention to the spirit, of the narrative, this conclusion seems to acquire irresistible strength. It is admitted, that in the very condemnation of deluded man, his heavenly Judge tempered the severity of justice with mercy, and guarded against that despair which would have extinguished the vital principle of virtue, by giving assurance of a Deliverer to spring from the seed of the woman who should bruise (that is, subdue the power, and punish the malignity of) the serpent who had seduced them. If we admit the Divine institution of sacrifice, at this crisis, (which is surely the most rational interpretation of the narrative concerning the beasts slain immediately after the Fall, and of the sacrifices of Cain and Abel,) it will follow, that the mode in which this deliverance was to be effected was not indistinctly pointed out : even that God would accept the great Sacrifice, which the sacrifices now instituted prefigured, as a substitute for the life, and an atonement for the sins, of man.

“ But whether he could or could not conceive the particular mode in which it was to be effected, he certainly cherished a sure hope of future deliverance. Now let me ask, What hope could he have cherished, if he conceived of death as the final extinction of his being ? If eternal annihilation was his own fate, what consolation could he derive from the promise of a future deliverer ? What mixture of hope could have remained to sustain the energy of virtue, had he conceived of that death which immediately awaited him and all his posterity, as a total extinction of being ? I contend, therefore, that the very history of the fall of man not only suggested the idea, and gave an intelligible hint, of a future state, but was calculated to inspire every serious and pious



mind with an humble but assured hope that they were in the hands of a merciful Judge ; who, though he thought it necessary to remove them from this world by a corporeal dissolution, would yet preserve the breath of life, that living soul which he had himself inspired, and which had been formed after the image of God, from total annihilation and eternal death.

“ Such seems to have been the conclusion naturally suggested by the history of the Fall. But this conclusion must have derived great additional clearness and strength from the circumstances attending the very first instance of death inflicted upon man ; combined with the knowledge of the divine attributes, which revelation and experience had supplied.

“ The scripture account (Gen. iv. 3—12) shows that the severity of the Divine justice was tempered with mercy. When the wretched criminal deprecates the infliction of his punishment as ‘ greater than he could bear,’ and, distracted by the horrors of conscience, views in every human being an avenger eager to retaliate his cruelty on himself, exclaiming, ‘ It shall come to pass, that every one who findeth me shall slay me ;’ God mercifully assures him, his life should be protected, and sets a mark upon him, lest any, finding him, should kill him. He is indeed banished from the sacred spot where the immediate presence of the Lord displayed its glory ; but yet abundant time is afforded him for repentance, his life is protracted, and we find his family flourishing and numerous. This is entirely conformable to our ideas of the Divine attributes.

“ But contemplate the fate of Abel, and let us consider what would be its effect upon every human being, if they conceived death was total annihilation. He perished in consequence of his acting in a manner conformable to the will, and acceptable in the sight, of God. ‘ By faith,’ says the apostle, ‘ Abel offered unto God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain ; by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts ; and by it he being dead yet speaketh.’ What is the plain meaning of the apostle’s



declaration? This, assuredly, that the death of Abel speaketh the immortality of the soul, in language too plain to be misunderstood. Nor can we conceive that the circumstances attending this first infliction of death upon man, could have been ordered by Providence, so as to testify more plainly this great truth of a future state of recompence, had this been the sole purpose for which they were designed. To conceive that a just and merciful God should openly approve the sacrifice of Abel, and yet permit him, in consequence of that very action, to suffer a cruel death, which put a final period to his existence; while his murderer, whom the same God openly condemned, was yet permitted to live; all this is so monstrous, so contradictory to the Divine attributes, as to prove, beyond possibility of doubt, that this event was permitted to take place, partly at least, in order to show that death was not a final extinction of being, but, on the contrary, a passage from this world to another, where the righteous should be recompensed for their adherence to the will of their heavenly Father, in opposition to suffering and death, by a sure and eternal reward.

“ In the next chapter (Gen. v. 24) another fact is recorded, which surely conveys an intelligible hint of another state of existence, by giving an instance of one mortal, distinguished for piety, being translated to that state without passing through death: for we are told of Enoch, that he ‘walked with God, and he was not; for God took him.’ It has been said that this fact is related with studied obscurity and brevity, as if to conceal the idea of another life. But this is surely an unfounded inference. It is related in exactly the same style and manner as every other fact in this part of the patriarchal history; and it is so plain, that the only possible way of concealing or obscuring the information it contains would be entirely to suppress the fact. Enough is told to justify the observation of the apostle: ‘By faith Enoch was translated, that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him; for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God;’ and the inference of the author of Ecclesiasticus: ‘Enoch



pleased the Lord, and was translated, being an example of repentance to all generations.'”\*

We regard these facts and reasonings as sufficient to establish the point under consideration; namely, that from the beginning the doctrine of the immortality of the soul was known and believed.

To these we might properly add, a belief in the existence of good and bad angels, and several other tenets which stand so intimately connected with the foregoing that an acquaintance with them cannot be doubted. But as we have not data for supplying all the particulars which existed in the religious doctrines of this period, we leave what has been advanced to the judgment of the serious reader, and pass from this part of the subject.

We proceed to notice those laws which were at this period recognised as Divine commandments.

That some such laws existed, the preceding remarks go to prove. For it is evident that those doctrines to which reference has been made could not have been promulgated and received, unaccompanied by some moral law. Sin could not be spoken of and prohibited, and affect the conscience, and be atoned for by sacrifice, as a mere abstract idea. It must have been practically defined. “Sin is the transgression of the law;” (1 John iii. 4;) and therefore a divinely-sanctioned law must have been known in order to have given sin its proper character. We know this was done in Paradise. A law suited to the state and condition of man was given by God himself, accompanied by a plain declaration of the penalty which was attached to a violation of it. And on the ground of this law the fallen pair were judged: “Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof *I commanded thee* that thou shouldest not eat?” (Gen. iii. 11.) And as we know that after the Fall the Divine Being still recognised the moral responsibility of man, it seems certain that he must have extended his commands to meet the altered circumstances in which he stood. Much has been said respecting natural

\* DEAN GRAVES On the Pentateuch, pp. 293—299.



religion, as being the basis of revealed, because several great leading truths are pre-supposed by the earliest sacred writers : but this is a great and most pernicious error. The Bible intimates that "God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."\* (Acts iii. 21.) When we recollect that about four thousand years of the world's history had passed away before any of the sacred writings which we now possess were recorded, it will be considered most unreasonable to suppose that all the religious knowledge which existed previously was the product of the unaided intellect of man. In fact, since the Fall, religion, in its true and proper sense, is not *natural* to man. We can find no age of the world, since the Creation, entirely destitute of that religious knowledge which is clearly attributable to immediate revelation from God. Even if we could suppose it possible for man, by the unaided effort of his intellect, to form any just ideas of his duty and obligation to his Creator, it would still remain to be shown that these excogitations possessed the authority of Divine law. If they did not possess this authority in respect of the persons who had discovered them, how low must have been the character of the estimation in which they would be held by the great mass of mankind, who in every age will be found indisposed to such deep and spiritual researches, and perhaps incapable of them ! How could these be held morally responsible for an attention to the moral obligations elicited by the intellectual efforts of others ? We are fully assured that nothing of this kind ever did exist. The fact is, that the manner in which the piety of individuals is spoken of, as well as the punishment inflicted on offenders, clearly shows that the persons so dealt with must have had a plain and full revelation of the Divine will. We are distinctly informed, that God dealt with the early generations as if they had possessed a revealed law ; and government without law is a solecism. Yet the Almighty did govern the world even from the beginning. We hear of his approving certain conduct,

\* See WATSON'S Works, vol. viii. p. 3.



and, on the contrary, of his condemning evil, as if its character and penalties were known and understood. This, in the absence of other evidence, may serve to assure us that those persons who lived in early times had a distinct knowledge of the requirements of the Divine will, which, written upon the hearts of men, exercised an influence even after the traditionary communication of them had become corrupted.

The general teaching of the Book of Genesis unites with all ancient tradition to support these views. Yet it is difficult clearly to define and apply them. But as in the case of religious doctrine, so is it here : laws existed in the early ages which were incorporated into the Mosaic code. "Thus, for example, the Mosaic laws of inheritance were originally patriarchal. Again : if a man died, and left a widow without children, his brother, according to a law of Moses, was to marry his widow. This also had been one of the patriarchal laws. Again : the distinction between clean and unclean beasts made by Moses was a patriarchal and even an antediluvian distinction. Again : Moses took his burnt-offerings either from the herds or flocks, or turtle-doves and young pigeons. The patriarchs did the same. He sprinkled also on two occasions the blood of the sacrifices with a bough of hyssop. This was also the patriarchal mode of sprinkling it. I will just add, that he revived also among his people, when he left Egypt, the use of the cubit and the shekel, which had been patriarchal weights and measures. I conclude, therefore, that when the Israelites were delivered from bondage, they came again under the patriarchal government ; and that Moses was instructing the people, when Jethro came to him, as Abraham had done before, out of those statutes and laws of God which had been given by God to Adam." \*

These laws were by ancient Jewish commentators called "the statutes of Adam," and, at other times, "the precepts of the sons of Noah." We have no precise enumeration of

\* CLARKSON'S "Researches," p. 21.



them : the accounts that have reached us through various channels, although generally agreeing, are found to differ in several particulars. Comparing the account of Maimonides with those of Selden and Dr. Eachard, we obtain the following as an approximation to the substance of the principal of them :—

1. To abstain from idolatry.
2. To worship the true God.
3. To commit no murder.
4. To refrain from all impure lusts.
5. To avoid all rapine, theft, and robbery.
6. To administer true justice.

And to these we feel bound to add,—

7. To observe the sabbath as a day of sacred rest and worship.

A great variety of authorities might be quoted in support of this statement. Dr. Hales, one of our most learned commentators, asserts : “There is great reason to believe that the substance at least of the Decalogue was of primitive institution.”\* Bishop Cumberland also declares, “that the patriarchs did most diligently observe all the great and leading precepts which related both to God and man ; and that they were moved to this diligent observance of them by the same great promises, the fear of the same Divine judgments, and the terror of the same punishments, which the law of Moses held out.”†

To these might be added Grotius, Ellis, and others ; but we only consider it necessary to offer a few words in support of the seventh of these laws. The others appear to come to us sanctioned by such evidence as must carry conviction to every mind. The last has been disputed, and is not found in any of the lists which we have consulted. We therefore call special attention to this point ; and in support of it cite the following propositions, which are laid down by Kennicott :—

“I. That this blessing and sanctifying the seventh day

\* MANT'S Bible, on Job xxiii. 11, 12.

† *De Legibus Patriarcharum*, p. 443. London, 1724.



contained an order from God to Adam and his posterity, to observe a weekly sabbath, or one day in seven after an holy manner.

“II. That though this command was re-inforced by a more awful delivery of it from Mount Sinai, yet it was expressly observed by the children of Israel, before that delivery of it from Mount Sinai.

“III. That this observation of theirs must have been in obedience to some positive institution; and as there is no intermediate or second institution, it could be only in obedience to this first institution, which consequently continued in force down to the delivery of the law from Sinai.

“IV. That the same institution was observed during the ante-Mosaic economy, and that this sabbath was the day on which Cain and Abel came together to offer their oblations to the Deity.” \*

We shall not follow the learned Hebraist through his lengthened and elaborate explication and defence of these propositions, but shall satisfy ourselves with giving the most material part of the evidence which he has collected, adding that which is supplied by other authorities.

And here let the original words be as differently rendered as they can be, without violence to their meaning, they must signify thus much: that when God had in six days finished the creation, he commanded the succeeding or seventh day to be observed by the first human pair as a day of peculiar holiness. For as no one, I suppose, will assert that this sanctification of the seventh day was to be observed by God; or that a Being essentially (and therefore always) infinite in holiness, could be more holy on this than on the preceding days; this act of holiness must be referred to man. And how man was to behave, in consequence of this injunction, will appear from the nature of the words, and the peculiar time of their delivery. The original words, the English version of which is, “And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it,” may be rendered, “And God ordered (man)

\* DR. KENNICOTT'S “Dissertation on the Oblations of Cain and Abel,” p. 122, *et seq.*



to bless and worship on the seventh day." Or perhaps the whole passage may be rendered more correctly as follows: "And God rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made; and God caused (man) to bless and worship on the seventh day, and ordered (him) to sanctify it."

In support of this rendering we have not only the fact that it is agreeable to the grammar of the original language, but also, which is of equal consequence, that it accords with the context and the general sense of the writer. Adam and his wife had been both created on the sixth day; and with them God finished the work of his creation. It is therefore highly reasonable to suppose, when God had, on the remainder of that day, given them a view of their situation, their circumstances, and their relation to himself and to each other, that he should command them to devote the day following (as the first-fruits of their time) to a grateful acknowledgment of that goodness which gave them so happy an existence; and that after he himself, having made the world in six days, rested on the seventh, so they, in a devout remembrance of it, should then forbear to do what was afterwards to be their employment, and give up that one day to thanksgiving and the adoration of their Creator. After this manner was the day appointed; and doubtless it was carefully observed, and kept holy to the Lord.

The observation of this first sabbath being thus determined, with the holiness exercised thereon by our first parents, we have further to inquire into the permanence of this institution. It will, indeed, be allowed that in general "every wise institution must be deemed to last as long as the usefulness of that institution continues: consequently, if the usefulness of the sabbath continued, the sabbath must have been designed to continue also, and to be in force after its first observation."

It is a remarkable confirmation of this doctrine of the primitive appointment and patriarchal observance of the sabbath day, that, although the Decalogue certainly contains a repetition of some laws which were previously obligatory on



mankind, (for no one can believe that either murder or idolatry was allowable in the patriarchal ages,) the fourth commandment which relates to the sabbath is the only one which distinctly refers to any previous knowledge of obligation. It begins with language which fully implies this: "*Remember* the sabbath day to keep it holy." And the reason for this observance is not any immediate or prospective advantage, but precisely that which was originally assigned: "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it."

But whatever doubt may rest on some parts of this doctrine, it is a certain fact that the observance of the sabbath was enjoined as a commandment of God before the giving of the law on Mount Sinai. When journeying from Rephidim to the wilderness of Sinai, the Israelites were sorely distressed for want of meat; and the Lord said unto Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no. And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread: and they came and told Moses. And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, Tomorrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord. And Moses said, Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the sabbath, in it there shall be none. And it came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. And the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my *commandments* and my *laws*?" (Exod. xvi. 4, 22, 23, 25—28.)

Now it is evident that here the sabbath is spoken of as a Divine law with which the people were well acquainted before the giving of the Decalogue. We may certainly conclude, from what has been advanced, that this observance arose from some positive injunction given in primitive times.

We will only add a few quotations from ancient authors in support of this early appointment of the sabbath day.



Josephus says, "There is no city, Greek or Barbarian, in which the custom of resting on the seventh day is not preserved."\*

Philo observes, "It is a festival celebrated, not only in one city or country, but throughout the whole world."†

Dion Cassius states, "that the custom of computing the time by weeks was derived from the Egyptians to all mankind; and that this was not a new, but a very ancient, custom."‡ In which Herodotus concurs.

Selden, remarking on the passage which has been quoted from Josephus, allows, "that it proves the universal computation of time by weeks."§ The same learned author adds, that Sunday was the first day of the week in the east from all antiquity.||

Grotius informs us, that "the memory of the six days' work was preserved, not only among the Greeks and Italians, by honouring the seventh day, but also among the Celtæ and Indians, who all measured the time by weeks."¶

"Aristobulus quotes Homer and Hesiod, who speak of the seventh day as sacred and venerable. Clemens Alexandrinus speaks of the sabbath in the same terms as Aristobulus; and he adds some passages from the ancients, who celebrate the seventh day. Some believe that Job observed the sabbath day, because at the end of seven days he offered a sacrifice to the Lord on account of his children. Some rabbins inform us that Joseph also observed the sabbath in Egypt."\*\*

Bishop Cumberland seems to support the same view of the subject, by arguing that "the Mosaic law imposed no new obligation on Gentiles; and that, as the strangers residing among the Jews were required to observe the sabbath, this requirement must have been based upon, and acquired its force from, patriarchal law."††

With the following extract we pass from this subject:—

\* *Contra Apion*. lib. ii.

† Quoted by GROTIUS, *De Veritate*, lib. i. sect. 16. ‡ Lib. xxxiii.

§ *Jus Nat. et Gent.* lib. iii. cap. 22. || *Ibid.*

¶ *De Veritate*, lib. i. sect. 16. \*\* CALMET, article *Sabbath*.

†† *De Legibus Patriarcharum*, p. 464.



“ Whether the institution of the sabbath was from the beginning of the world, and one day in seven always observed by the patriarchs, before the promulgation of the law ; or whether the sanctification of the seventh day is related only by way of anticipation, as an ordinance not to take place until the introduction of the Jewish economy ; is a matter of some debate among the learned ; but, I think, with little or no reason ; for when we consider that as soon as the sacred penman had said, ‘ God ended his work and rested,’ he adds immediately, in the words of the same tense, ‘ He blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it ;’ when we compare this passage in Genesis with the twentieth chapter of Exodus, wherein Moses speaks of God’s ‘ blessing and sanctifying the sabbath,’ not as an act then first done, but as what he had formerly done upon the creation of the world ; when we remember, that all the patriarchs, from Adam to Moses, had set times for their solemn assemblies, and these times were weekly, and of divine institution ; that, upon the return of these weekly sabbaths, very probably it was that Cain and Abel offered their respective sacrifices to God ; and that Noah, the only righteous person among the (last generation of the) antediluvians, Abraham, the most faithful servant of God after the Flood, and Job, that ‘ perfect and upright man,’ are all supposed to have observed it ; we cannot but think, that the day whereon the work of creation was concluded, from the very beginning of time, was, every week, (until men had corrupted their ways,) kept holy, as being the birth-day of the world, (as Philo, *De Mundi Opificio*, styles it,) and the universal festival of mankind.”\*

There is another inquiry which we think it proper to consider here : it refers to the eating of animal flesh for food during the antediluvian period. At first sight, this would appear to refer more to the civil economy and history of the time ; but as the opinion which we have formed on this subject, and the evidence which we shall have to adduce respecting it, are decidedly of a religious character, we

\* STACKHOUSE’S “History of the Bible,” vol. i. p. 14, *note*.



have preferred the consideration of it in this place. The liberty given to man in Paradise respecting his food must first be noticed. To him the Almighty said, "Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat." (Gen. i. 29.) As, in immediate connexion with these words, we have the entire subjection of animal creation to Adam most distinctly asserted, we think it certain that it was not the Divine intention that man in a state of innocence should feed on the flesh of animals. And, passing over the first few chapters of Genesis, we find the Almighty, in addressing Noah after the Flood, enlarging this grant, and giving animal food to man precisely as herbs and fruits had been previously given. After renewing the sovereignty of man over all the inferior animals, as had been done in the case of Adam, it is said, "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things." (Gen. ix. 3.) The question, therefore, is, whether before the Flood animal flesh was used as food; and, if so, whether it was so used generally or under special circumstances.

Hottinger has fully discussed this subject,\* giving the arguments and authorities on both sides; and from a careful review of his investigation, we incline to think that animal food was not generally allowed to man before the Flood, but that, under special circumstances, it was taken from the time of the Fall. It will be evident, at the outset of this inquiry, that the Fall was the only great and important event which materially altered the condition of man from the Creation to the Flood. Now, it is worthy of inquiring, whether this event was likely in any way to induce the eating of animal flesh. We do not think that the subject is capable of proof: the evidence is neither clear nor complete. It is certain, however, that the Fall introduced the practice of animal sacrifice; and that, in the very earliest accounts of

\* *Historia Creationis, Opera Diei Sexti*, quæst. xcv.



animal sacrifice, as preserved either by Jews or Heathens, the eating of the flesh always made a part of the religious rite. We shall furnish some proof of the latter proposition, and then draw such inferences as may appear to be warranted.

With respect to Jewish sacrifices, they were of three kinds :—

First, such as were wholly offered up to God, and burnt upon the altar. These were the holocausts, or whole burnt-offerings.

Secondly, those wherein, besides something offered up to God upon the altar, the priests had a portion, of which they and their families partook. These are also subdivided into sin-offerings and trespass-offerings.

Thirdly, those in which, besides something offered up to God, and a portion bestowed on the priests, the offerers themselves had a share likewise. These were called peace-offerings.

Those of the first class, although they were themselves wholly offered up to God, and burnt upon the altar, (perhaps to signify some special mystery concerning Christ,) yet had peace-offerings regularly annexed to them, when they were not offerings for the whole congregation, but for any particular person ; that so the offerers might at the same time, when they offered up to God, feast also upon the sacrifices.

With regard to the second : the persons presenting the offering did not themselves eat of it ; and the reason was, because they were not perfectly reconciled to God, being at the time in a state of guilt, for which they made atonement in those sacrifices : but they did it by their priests, who were their mediators with God, and, as their proxies, ate of the sacrifices for them. So, then, the eating of the sacrifices, one way or another, stood immediately or remotely connected with the observance of the rite itself. Thus we find in scripture that the eating of sacrifices is continually referred to as belonging to sacrifice in general.

We give some instances. Of Elkanah it is said, he “ went up out of his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the Lord of hosts in Shiloh. And when the time was that



Elkanah offered, he gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters, *portions* : but unto Hannah he gave a double *portion* ;” (1 Sam. i. 3—5 ;) that is, portions to eat of those sacrifices that had been offered up to God.

Again, in the ninth chapter of the same book, where we have the account of Saul seeking Samuel : “ As soon,” say they, “ as ye be come into the city, ye shall straightway find him, before he go up to the high place to *eat* : for the people will not *eat* until he come, because he doth bless the sacrifice.” (1 Sam. ix. 13.)

We have reference to the same practice in the sixteenth chapter. When Samuel went to Bethlehem to anoint David, he said, “ I am come to sacrifice unto the Lord : sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice ;” but when he understood that Jesse’s youngest son was absent, he said to Jesse, “ Send and fetch him : for we will not *sit down* till he come hither.” (1 Sam. xvi. 5, 11.)

We may also refer to the practice of selecting the portion for the priest, as described in the case of the sons of Eli. (1 Sam. ii. 13.)

It will be important to show, that the same practice obtained among Heathens, and is traceable to the earliest ages. It was prevalent in the apostolic times ; and St. Paul makes frequent reference to it, and gives sundry advices on the subject. We instance 1 Cor. viii. 10 : “ For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol’s temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols ?” Out of this practice undoubtedly arose the famous dispute in the primitive church, whether it were lawful to eat things sacrificed to idols.

Those Gentile feasts upon the sacrifices were usually kept in the temple, where the sacrifice was offered. Hence, when Herodotus gives the celebrated story of Cleobis and Bito,\* he says, “ When the succeeding *sacrifice and festival* were ended, the young men retired to rest within the temple.”

\* *Olio*, xxxi.



Homer gives a similar account :—

“And now the Greeks their hecatomb prepare ;  
Between their horns the salted barley threw,  
And, with their heads to heaven, the victims slew :  
The limbs they sever from the’ enclosing hide ;  
The thighs, selected to the gods, divide :  
On these, in double cauls involved with art,  
The choicest morsels lay from every part.  
The priest himself before his altar stands,  
And burns the offering with his holy hands,  
Pours the black wine, and sees the flames aspire ;  
The youth with instruments surround the fire :  
The thighs thus sacrificed and entrails dress’d,  
The assistants part, transfix, and roast the rest :  
Then spread the tables, and the feast prepare ;  
Each takes his seat, and each receives his share.”\*

And in another place :—

“With hasty feasts they sacrifice and pray,  
To’ avert the dangers of the doubtful day.”†

In the *Odyssey* also, when Telemachus is introduced to Nestor, while he is sacrificing to Neptune, we are told :—

“Suppliant he pray’d. And now, the victims dress’d,  
They draw, divide, and celebrate the feast.”‡

Plato, in his second book *De Legibus*, speaks of those sacrificial feasts as “feasts after divine worship.”

Strabo mentions a strange kind of worship used by the ancient Persians in their sacrifices, where no part of the flesh was offered to the gods, but all was eaten up by those that brought it, and by their guests.

Plutarch also makes this eating of the animal flesh such an integral part of the sacrificial rite, that he says, when Catiline and his conspirators had sacrificed a man, they “did all eat somewhat of the flesh,” using this religious bond to confirm them in their treachery. And the same author again observes, “It is a strange and uncouth rite, in the worship of the goddess Hecate, that they which offered sacrifice unto her did not partake of it.”§

Several of the cases to which we have referred, are of a remote date ; but the practice of joining feasting with sacri-

\* *Iliad*, book i. POPE’S Translation.

† *Ibid.* book ii.

‡ *Odyssey*, book iii.

§ CUDWORTH’S “Sermons,” Discourse on the Lord’s Supper.



ficing obtained in the earliest ages. On this point we again quote the learned Cudworth. He says, "It was so general, (amongst the ancient Heathens,) in their idolatrous sacrifices, that Isaac Abarbanel, a learned Jew, observed it. In those ancient times, whoever sacrificed to idols made a feast upon the sacrifice. And the original of it amongst them was so ancient, that it is ascribed by their own authors to Prometheus, as Salmasius, in his *Solino-Plinian Exercitationes*, notes; which Prometheus, although, according to Eusebius's *Chronicon*, and our ordinary chronologers, his time would fall near about the 3028th year of the Julian period, which was long after Noah; yet it is certain, that he lived much sooner, near about Noah's time, in that he is made to be the son of Japhet, which was Noah's son, from whom the Europeans descended, called therefore by the poet *Iüpeti genus*; although I rather subscribe to the judgment of the learned Vossius, that this Prometheus was no other than Noah himself, the father of Japhet and not his son, because the other things do so well agree to him."\* Nothing perhaps more fully shows the universal prevalence of this sacrificial feasting, than the incidental allusion of St. Paul, who, in reference to Christian privileges, observes, "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to *eat* which serve the tabernacle." (Heb. xiii. 10.)

Our object in making these references has been to show, that, from the earliest ages, both Jews and Gentiles regarded feasting upon the animal sacrificed, as a part of the sacrificial service; and the question which consequently presents itself to our mind is simply this: Did this practice make a part of the primitive sacrificial rites, or was it added to them some time after the Flood? We incline to the former opinion. We cannot conceive what reason could lead men who were freely allowed the use of animal flesh on all occasions, to make the eating of it so special a part of the sacrificial service. Why, on such an occasion, feast on flesh more than on vegetables or fruits? If, for two thousand years after the Fall, the animal sacrifices offered unto God had been

\* CUDWORTH'S Works, vol. iv. p. 226.



entirely consumed, and no portion of them eaten, would not the subsequent introduction of the practice of eating a part have appeared like sacrilege? How, then, is the origin of the practice to be accounted for? Very easily. When animal sacrifice was appointed by God, as a means of setting forth the death which was deserved by sin, and the death which the Redeemer was to suffer as a ransom-price for its guilt, it was also appointed that a part of the sacrifice should be eaten, to teach men that their life was only continued through the death of the promised Mediator. This idea is scriptural, and was enunciated by Christ himself with great force. "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." (John vi. 51, 53—55.) As sacrifices typified the Saviour's passion and death, did not the eating of the flesh of those animals signify the spiritual blessings which were to result from his atonement? We think this to be a just deduction; and, if so, then it appears reasonable to conclude that this significant practice was co-eval with the institution of sacrificial rites.

If it be objected, that on these principles there could be no reason for the enlarged grant of animal food to man generally in the time of Noah; we reply, that a circumstance of an analogous kind took place afterward, which may illustrate to some extent the Divine government in primitive times: When the Israelites commenced their journey through the wilderness, placed as they were under the special guidance and teaching of God, they were not allowed to eat any animal food unless a part had been offered in sacrifice. The command ran thus: "What man soever there be of the house of Israel, that killeth an ox, or lamb, or goat, in the camp, or that killeth it out of the camp, and bringeth it not



unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer an offering unto the Lord before the tabernacle of the Lord ; blood shall be imputed unto that man." (Lev. xvii. 3, 4.) This was intended at once to prevent idolatry, and to make all the animal food which was eaten, in some sense, typical of the promised blessings of redemption. Yet when these tribes obtained possession of their promised inheritance, this law was relaxed, and they were told, " If the place which the Lord thy God hath chosen to put his name there be too far from thee, then thou shalt kill of thy herd and of thy flock, which the Lord hath given thee. Only be sure that thou eat not the blood : for the blood is the life ; and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh." (Deut. xii. 21, 23.)

It will not be denied that the Israelites, in their journeying, were in circumstances very similar to those of the first families that existed upon the earth. They stood in immediate connexion with Divine teaching ; they were not associated with any other human population ; they had among them a special residence of Deity, and a place of sacrifice. Shall we err, then, in believing that the families which first lived on our earth were, like these, allowed only to eat the flesh of animals offered in sacrifice ? and that, when, in the days of Noah, a mode of proceeding was adopted which resulted in the dispersion of mankind over the face of the earth, this law should be relaxed in the grant already mentioned nearly in the very words, and involving precisely the same injunction, as that which has been already quoted from the book of Deuteronomy ? God said unto Noah, " Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you ; even as the green herb have I given you all things. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat." (Gen. ix. 3, 4.)

We do not expect that these facts and arguments will secure universal assent to our proposition ; we do not think the case proved, or that it is capable of *proof*. But we consider that what has been advanced is sufficient to make it appear probable, that, from the Fall to the Flood, the flesh of animals offered in sacrifice was eaten, and this flesh only. We



add, in order to complete the parallel, that it is known that our first parents were clothed in skins ; and, in all probability, these skins were those of animals offered in sacrifice. It is also certain that in after-times the skin of the victim, as well as a part of the flesh, belonged to the priest.

We have now discussed the most important circumstances connected with the religion of the antediluvian world ; and should at once proceed to apply the conclusions which we have elicited to the several generations that lived in this portion of time. But before we enter upon this, we call attention to what has been urged in the Preliminary Dissertation, and incidentally noticed in the preceding pages, respecting the intellectual position and mental cultivation which these people enjoyed.

If what has been placed before the reader on this subject be candidly considered, it will be admitted that men in those early days possessed mental advantages nearly, if not quite, equal to those which have been enjoyed in any subsequent age. To strengthen this opinion without referring to our own pages, we give the following extract from a learned author, who speaks explicitly on the point :—

“ The first created divine institutor of all philosophy was Adam, who, without all peradventure, was the greatest, amongst mere mortals, that ever the world possessed ; concerning whom the scripture tells us, (Gen. ii. 19, 20,) that he gave names to every living thing, &c. ; which argues his great sagacity and philosophic penetration into their natures. For, look, as our conceptions, if true, so also names, if proper, should be, and, as we may presume, at first were no other than, images of things. So both Aristotle and Plato call names ‘ imitations of things.’ Adam could by his profound philosophy anatomize, and exactly pry into, the very natures of things, and there contemplate those glorious ideas and characters of created light and order, which the increated Light and Divine Wisdom had impressed thereon ; and thence he could, by the quickness of his apprehension, immediately collect, and form the same into a complete system or body of philosophy, as also most methodically branch



forth the same into particular sciences, &c. Whereas, all philosophers since Adam having lost, by his fall, this philosophic sagacity of prying into the natures of things, they can only make some poor conjectures from some common accidents, and the external superficies or effects of things; and therefore cannot receive conceptions, or give names exactly suited to the natures of things, as Adam before them did.

“And that Plato had received some broken tradition touching this philosophy of Adam, is evident from what he lays down in his *Politicus* and elsewhere, touching the Golden Age, or the state of innocence; wherein, says he, our first parent was the greatest philosopher that ever was. And Baleus (*De Script. Brit. cent. x. præfat.*) tells us, ‘that from Adam all good arts and human wisdom flowed, as from their fountain. He was the first that discovered the motions of the celestial bodies, the natures of plants, of living and all other creatures: he first published the forms of ecclesiastic, politic, and economic government; from whose school proceeded whatever good arts and wisdom were afterward propagated by our fathers unto mankind. So that whatever astronomy, geometry, and other arts contain in them, he knew the whole thereof.’ The like Hornius (*Hist. Philosoph. lib. i. cap. 2*): ‘Adam, therefore, being constituted in this theatre of the universe, he was ignorant of nothing that pertained to the mystery of nature. He knew exactly, and that without error, the natures of all animals, the virtues of herbs, and the causes of things. The light of reason, which we call ‘logic,’ altogether unspotted and without cloud, overcame the obscurity of things, and dispelled darkness, if there were any. Now, there was the highest exactness of the economics and politics; for man was never so much as then a sociable creature: which the ancient mythologists are wont to adumbrate under the Golden Age, wherein

*Sponte sua sine lege fidem rectumque colebant.\**

The seat of this most noble philosophy is, in the sacred scrip-

\* OVIDII *Metamorph. lib. i. 90.*



tures, styled the garden of Eden. For there is nothing more excellent given, by the great God, to mankind than that pleasure which ariseth from the contemplation of things. The Chaldees call this garden of pleasure **פֶּרֶדִּס**, and the Greeks, following them, **Παράδεισος**, *Paradisos*. Thus Hornius (cap. xi.) repeats the same in these words: ‘All arts, as mankind, had their beginning from Adam, who among the pleasures of Paradise learned philosophy even from God himself.’ And Keckerman (Tract. ii. *Præcogn. Logic.* cap. 2) says, that he ‘doubts not but that our first parents delivered over to posterity, together with other sciences, even logic also; specially seeing they who were nearest the origin of all things had an intellect so much the more excellent than ours, by how much the more they excelled us in length of life, firmitude of health, and, lastly, in air, food, &c.’

“From Adam sprung Seth, who, according to Josephus, (*Antiq.* lib. i. cap. 3,) followed his father in the pursuit of wisdom, specially that part thereof which concerns the heavenly bodies, their **πάθη καὶ συμπτώματα**, in which kind of philosophy he proved a very eminent doctor. So Hornius (*Hist. Philos.* lib. vii. cap. 2): ‘The first mention of letters falls upon Seth’s times; who being mindful of his father’s prophecy, foretelling the universal dissolution of things, the one by the Deluge, the other by fire, being not willing to extinguish his famous inventions of astrology, he thought upon some monument, to which he might concredit these mysteries. At length it seemed good unto him to engrave arts and disciplines on two great pillars of brick, thereby to preserve them from destruction.’ And that this tradition is not vain, is proved by the authority of Josephus; who witnesseth, that one of these pillars remained in Syria even to his time, and was seen by him.

“The learned also reckon Enoch amongst the first divine philosophers, specially for his supposed skill in astrology and astronomy. So Eusebius, (*De Præpar. Evan.* lib. ix.,) and out of him Bochart (*Phaleg*, lib. ii. cap. 13, p. 101): ‘I cannot but add,’ says he, ‘what is found concerning the same Enoch in Eusebius, out of Eupolemus Of the Jews.



He says that Abraham, when he taught astrology and other sciences at Heliopolis, affirmed, that the Babylonians attributed the invention of the same to Enoch, and that he was the first inventor of astrology. It follows, not far after, that the Grecians attribute the invention of astrology to Atlas; and that Atlas was the same with Enoch, &c. In which words we may note that Enoch and Atlas are reputed for the same: perhaps from hence,—that as Atlas by the Carthaginians is called Duris and Dyris, so Enoch is by the Arabians Idris.’ Thus the author of the book called *Juchasin* (p. 134): ‘Hanoch, who is called Edris, began to compose astronomic books. They say that Enoch was first called Edris by Muhammed, who had it from his master Abdalla the Talmudist. For Enoch, according to the ancient tradition, was called Metator, or, as Jonathan, in his Chaldaic Paraphrase on Gen. v. 24, ספרא רבא, *the great scribe*: which name Muhammed could not more aptly render for his purpose than by the Arabic, Edris, which signifies, *a learned, sage disputer*, and investigator of accurate things; from the Arabic word which signifies, properly, *to winnow corn*; thence, metaphorically, *to dispute*. Whence Beidavi, an Arabic commentator, saith, that Enoch was called Edris by reason of his manifold study. For the Most High delivered him down thirty volumes. It is also said that he was the first calamographer, as also studious of astronomy and arithmetic. How far these traditions deserve assent, as also those other of the engraving of prophecies and astrology on pillars which, they say, continued after the Flood, it concerns us not to debate: only thus much we are assured by Jude, (verse 14,) that Enoch had certain prophecies, touching the world’s dissolution by fire, and the last judgment, &c. And that the Stoics derived their ἐκπύρωσις, or *purification of the world by fire*, from some broken idea of this prophecy of Enoch, is not without ground conjectured by Grotius and other critics. Baleus (*De Script. Brit.* cent. x. p. 3) tells us, that Enoch, a man famous for prophecy, is supposed to have written, before the Flood, of Divine matters, &c.”\*

\* GALE’S “Court of the Gentiles,” vol. ii. pp. 7—10.



In referring to a mass of traditional lore, handed down from extreme antiquity, even although selected and arranged with all the judgment and tact of the learned author of the "Court of the Gentiles," we do not expect that it will produce the effect which would follow from undoubted historic records. Nevertheless, the preceding extract, in connexion with what has been previously advanced, will be sufficient to give some distinct idea of the intellectual character of the people of whose religion we are now about to speak.

Without attempting any formal proof of an opinion elicited from the concurrence of so many circumstances, and sustained by the general tenor of revelation on this point, it appears extremely probable that, immediately after the Fall, Adam was made acquainted by God with the great elements of the economy of redemption ; and that, in connexion with this, partly expository of its truths, and partly instrumental in their accomplishment, God dwelt between the cherubim at the gate of Eden, and there appointed animal sacrifices to be offered, as typical of the atoning sacrifice of the promised Saviour.

Whatever defect may appear to exist in the evidence on which this opinion is founded, it will be admitted to have this much in its favour,—that it harmonizes the Divine dealings toward the first pair, with the general scope of the economy of grace ; and opens the way to a clear and consistent interpretation of the sacrifices of Cain and Abel, which every other scheme of interpretation involves in the greatest confusion.

Here, then, the progenitors of mankind dwelt and worshipped. Here, their children were associated with them in this holy exercise. Thus time passed away, until many men, women, and children lived upon the earth : at length, in process of time, it came to pass that Cain and Abel came to offer sacrifice unto the Lord. Various efforts have been made by learned men to fix a strict sense on those words, "in process of time." Hales supposes that the phrase refers to the end of the year ; and Kennicott, to the sabbath day. It seems probable that this did take



place on the sabbath ; yet the arguments used to prove, from this brief phrase, that it actually was on that day, do not appear to be conclusive. If we might venture to hazard a conjecture, we should say it seems most likely that those circumstances took place when Cain and Abel, arrived at man's estate, had married, and each of them therefore was called upon to bring an offering of his own unto the Lord. Hitherto they had engaged in acts of adoration as a part of the family of Adam ; now they worshipped in their own proper persons. That this took place on their marriage, is rendered probable from our hearing nothing of the children of Abel ; but, immediately after the banishment of Cain, we hear of his having a son. However it might be, the circumstance was one calculated to call forth the religious opinions and feelings of the two brethren. Abel came with his animal offering, which he presented in faith, and met from his heavenly Father a gracious acceptance. In what way this was manifested, we are not informed : unquestionably, it was attested to his heart by the influence of the Holy Spirit ; and as in after-times the Divine Being testified his acceptance of sacrifice by consuming the victims with fire, it is probable this was likewise done here ; for it seems clear, from the whole subject, that Abel's acceptance and Cain's rejection were alike openly and publicly made known. We are convinced, that the spirit of Cain's offence was a rejection of the promise of a Mediator. He came as an unbeliever, and as such was rejected.

Notwithstanding the tragic circumstances that followed, it is cheering, thus early in the world's history, to have so decided a testimony to the efficacy of the atonement : faith saw it ; faith realized its virtue ; faith was crowned with salvation ; although the subject of this primitive faith was called to endure a violent death.

The account of the murder of Abel in our version is not only brief, but appears to be defective. The words, "And Cain talked with Abel his brother," (Gen. iv. 8,) do not express the sense of the original : it should rather have been, "And Cain said," &c. Our translators, not finding any



record of what was said, have given us that rendering. It is a fact not unworthy of notice, that the Samaritan Pentateuch supplies the words ; adding, "Let us walk out into the field." An eminent critic assures us, that the addition may be safely considered a part of the sacred text,\* and that the passage may be read thus : "And Cain said unto Abel his brother, Let us go out into the field. And it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain," &c.

The Jewish Targums pretend to give us the substance of their conversation ; and as the piece is ancient and curious, we insert it : "And Cain said unto Hebel his brother, Let us go out into the field ; and it came to pass that when they were in the field, Cain answered and said unto Hebel his brother, I thought that the world was created in mercy ; but it is not governed according to the merit of good works, nor is there any judgment, nor a Judge, nor shall there be any future state, in which good rewards shall be given to the righteous, and punishment executed on the wicked ; and now there is respect of persons in judgment. On what account is it that thy sacrifice has been accepted, and mine not received with complacency ? And Hebel answered and said, The world was created in mercy, and it is governed according to the fruit of good works ; there is a Judge, a future world, and a coming judgment, where good rewards shall be given to the righteous, and the impious punished ; and there is no respect of persons in judgment ; but because my works were better and more precious than thine, my oblation was received with complacency. And because of these things they contended on the face of the field ; and Cain rose up against Hebel his brother, and struck a stone into his forehead, and killed him."

Before we pass from this generation, it may be proper to remark, that Sanchoniatho, speaking of Cain and his wife, states that they stretched forth their hands to heaven toward the sun : for him they supposed to be God, the only Lord of heaven, calling him Beel-Semin, which, in the Phenician

\* DR. ADAM CLARKE, *sub loc.*



dialect, signifies, "Lord of heaven." Now, without attaching more importance to this tradition than it merits, we may observe, in passing, that, if the place of worship after the Fall was at the east of Eden, where stood the cherubim and the infolding fire,—a place which Cain had called "the face of the Lord," and "the presence of the Lord,"—then, when driven away, and denied all access, it is at least possible that he might have turned to the sun as the most glorious part in nature, and, in worshipping God, have stretched out his hands to this luminary, as he had formerly done toward the holy place.

We do not wish to be understood as intimating our belief that Cain actually introduced idolatry, although he might by his conduct have paved the way for its reception. It is, however, evident that the ancient Jewish writers, who had access to the most valuable historical traditions in the world, were of opinion that this great evil became prevalent very early in the history of our race. To show this fully, we give the following extract from the great Maimonides :—\*

"In the days of Enos, the sons of Adam fell into a great error, even the counsel of the wise men of that generation degenerated into folly ; and Enos himself was one of those who laboured under that error. Now their error consisted in this :—they said, Whereas God has created these stars and orbs to be the regulators of the universe, has placed them on high, and imparted glory to them ; inasmuch as they are servants which serve before him, they must be worthy of

\* Moses Maimonides, or Moses the son of Maimon, was a celebrated rabbi, born of an illustrious family at Cordova, in Spain, A. D. 1131. He was an eminent physician, and wrote on philosophy, logic, and medicine, in various languages ; as Arabic, Chaldee, and Greek. But, however eminent in other respects, he was still more so as a divine ; which led the Jews to say of him, that none ever so nearly approached to the wisdom and learning of their great founder and lawgiver as Moses the son of Maimon. He was remarkable for having cast off the authority of the absurd fables and traditions to which his nation had generally paid great deference. Of the *Yad Hachazakah* (whence the above extract is taken) Collier says, "Those that desire to learn the doctrine and the canon law contained in the Talmud, may read Maimonides's compendium of it in the *Yad* ; wherein they will find a great part of the fables and impertinences of the Talmud entirely discarded."



being praised and glorified, and of having homage paid unto them. Moreover it must be the pleasure of God, (blessed be He !) that those should be exalted and revered, whom he has made excellent and venerable, just as it is the pleasure of a king, that those who stand before him should be revered, which indeed is reverence (paid) to the king (himself).

“As soon as they were struck with this idea, they began to build temples to the stars, to offer sacrifices unto them, to praise them, to glorify them, in order that they might thus (according to their wicked notion) obtain the favour of the Creator. Such was the radical principle of idolatry.

“But after a length of time, false prophets arose among the sons of men, who said that God had commanded them, saying, ‘Worship ye such and such a star, or all the stars : offer sacrifices and drink-offerings to the same, to the end that the whole of the people, women, little ones, and all the other inhabitants of the land, may bow down to it.’ And so he (the false prophet) revealed unto them some image, which he invented in his own heart, saying that this was the image of such and such a star, which was revealed to him in his prophecy. And in this manner they began to make images in temples, under trees, on the tops of mountains, and on high hills ; to assemble together and to bow down to the same ; saying to the people, that this image had power of doing good and evil, and it was right to worship it, and to stand in awe of it. Moreover their priests used to say unto them, ‘By this service ye will increase and prosper ; and so and so ye ought to do.’

“And then other liars too began to appear, and to say that the star itself, or some orb or angel, spoke unto them, saying, ‘Worship ye one in such and such a manner’ (the manner in which it was to be worshipped having been revealed to them by the same) ; ‘and do ye do so and so.’ And so the thing spread over the whole world, (namely,) the worshipping of images, in various manners of worship, one different from the other, the offering of sacrifices, and the bowing down unto the same.

“But after another lapse of time, the glorious and awful



God came into utter oblivion, both in the conversation and in the minds of all existing, so that they knew him no more ; and, in consequence of this, the whole people of the land, the women and the little ones, knew only that image of wood or stone, or that temple of stones, which they were trained from their infancy to bow down unto, to worship and to swear by the name of. Even the wise men who were among them, as, for instance, their priests and the like men, imagined that there was no other god, except the stars, or orbs, for the sake of which, and in the likeness of which, those images were made ; but as to the Rock of the universe, there was no man who comprehended or knew him, except a few individuals who were then in the world ; as, for instance, Enoch, Methuselah, Noah, Shem, and Eber ; and in this manner the world was continually performing its revolutions, until the pillar of the world was born, namely, Abraham, our father.”\*

Whatsoever may be thought of the various details respecting the rise and progress of idolatrous principles and practices, furnished in this quotation, it will be admitted that the writer was pre-eminently qualified to form a judgment on the subject ; and, further, that the account he has given, in its general character, is in accordance with the scope and teaching of ancient profane history. The fact of the rise of idolatry before the Flood is distinctly asserted by Sancho-niatho, who not only speaks of revering the sun, as we have seen ; he also declares that dead men were deified, and pillars erected to their memory, and sacrifices offered unto them, and anniversary feasts celebrated to their honour ; and that all this took place before the time of Tubal-cain.

Passing on with the scripture narrative, we are informed of the eminent piety of Enoch. However distinguished this patriarch might have been in other respects, he was still more so for his unwavering devotedness to God. The account of Moses is very brief, but it is full and satisfactory. Its brevity, however, is accounted for. The inspired historian was not treating of religion, nor, properly speaking, writing

\* BARNARD'S "Maimonides," pp. 201—204.



a history ; he was compiling a rapid chronicle of the antediluvian generations. We are informed of Adam, Seth, and their lineal descendants, for six generations, without hearing more than that the individual was born, had children, and died at a given age. No single remark breaks the monotony of the detail : we are told nothing of their character, their intellect, or their prowess ; but when the name of Enoch is written, this rigid rule gives way, and a few expressive terms convey to the mind the most exalted ideas of his religious life. “Enoch walked with God : and he was not ; for God took him.” (Gen. v. 24.) Few as are these words, they distinctly inform us that Enoch maintained uninterrupted communion and fellowship with God, and that his life of piety was crowned with a triumphant end. We have, however, a brilliant commentary on this passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews. There we are told that, while walking with God by faith, Enoch “had this testimony, that he pleased God. Without faith it is impossible to please Him.” (Heb. xi. 5, 6.) Enoch had this living faith, and it guided him into, and preserved him in, the experience of the Divine favour and fellowship. It is this feature which brings out so interestingly the religion of these patriarchs. Like ours, it owed all its blessing to the atonement, it was only wrought in the heart by the Holy Ghost, and was the fruit of faith. This was the happy religion of Enoch. He knew that he was accepted, that he pleased God. And this piety met with a corresponding reward : “He was translated, that he should not see death.” He was suddenly changed from mortality to immortality, and body and soul passed at once from earth to heaven.

But we take a partial and unworthy view of the piety of this holy man, if we confine our observations to his personal character. We have to consider Enoch as set for the defence of religion in a time of prevailing wickedness and infidelity. Of this we have scripture proof. Enoch was an inspired prophet, and, early as he lived in the world, predicted the final judgment, and exhibited, in inspired language, the glory and majesty of God. The apostle Jude



(verse 14) has preserved a portion of these predictions ; and, in recording them, makes some reference to the situation of Enoch, which casts considerable light on the religion of those times. From this text it is evident that even then irreligious men not only wantonly and wickedly sinned against God ; they also denied his truth, and spoke as well as acted in direct opposition to his will. If, then, the piety of Enoch shines forth like a star in the midst of heaven, it shines, as far as we are informed, *alone*. We do not indeed believe that at this period *all* flesh had corrupted their way. But the signs of the times wore a threatening aspect. Men had multiplied, arts and elegance had been introduced, mental cultivation had been extended. But an increasing number of men were found faithless and wicked. The source of the only *really conservating* influence of any people or nation, the pious and devoted servants of God, diminished. In these circumstances, this holy man lifted up his voice against prevailing wickedness, condemned the licentiousness and violence of the age by the purity of his life, and asserted the government of God and the certainty of final retribution ; but, from the results which followed, we may judge, with little success. It would greatly illustrate this portion of history, if we knew the circumstances of his translation. Perhaps this was the time referred to by Maimonides, when “the glorious and awful God had come into oblivion,” and a miracle was necessary to honour the faith of the man who trusted in God, to set the broad seal of heaven in attestation of the truths he had taught, and to impress on the public mind, in the most powerful manner, the certainty of a future state of being. All this was effected by the translation of Enoch ; for, to adopt the words of an eloquent living author, “it is easy to suppose that there were scoffers in those days,\* as well as in the present ; men who, while the prophet was proclaiming the coming of the Lord, might ask for the promise or precursors of his coming, and point to the constancy and uniformity

\* The language of Jude, in connexion with the passage already referred to, makes this certain.



of nature, in which all things continue as they were from the beginning of the world; and taunting him with his sobriety and self-denial, his absurd hypocrisy and puritanical pretensions, might insult him with their infidel jests, and reel to their wretched revelry, with the maxim of their successors in their mouths, 'Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!' All this is, at least, possible; for my part, I think it likely; and I regard, therefore, the translation of the prophet as intended to prove to an infatuated world the actual existence of a future state, and the positive fact of human immortality. Under whatever circumstances the miracle might occur,—whether secret and sudden, whether unexpected or promised, whether witnessed at the moment, or afterwards ascertained by subsequent evidence,—there can be no doubt but that it was known and believed by the existing generation; some and sufficient means were employed by Providence to impress its truth upon the public mind; and the intention of Providence unquestionably was, to give a certainty and a sanction to those truths which the patriarch had preached, and to exhibit in his own person a splendid display of the reality of them all."\*

The effect produced on the people of that day, by this great miracle, is not known. One thing, however, appears certain: it was calculated to justify the dealings of God toward mankind, and to place in a clearer and stronger light than had been previously done the blessed results of serving God, and the nature of the rewards which he will bestow upon his servants. This had been shown to some extent in the case of Abel. This young man, having obtained the Divine acceptance, was cruelly murdered. Those persons who believed in the Divine government, (and the inhabitants of the world in Abel's time did,) saw it here attested in the acceptance of his offering: this melancholy fact proved the certainty of a future reward to the righteous. For men could not possibly suppose that the Divine Governor of the world would allow his accepted servant to be beaten to

\* BINNEY'S "Discourses on Faith," p. 112.



death, and his cruel murderer to live on for many years afterward, unless in another state of existence piety was to receive its reward. In this case, however, it must be observed that there were two things necessary to produce this salutary conviction on the mind: first, an admission of the doctrine of the Divine Government; and, secondly, a careful observance of reasoning upon passing events. This might be expected from the immediate family of Adam; but in the days of Enoch there is reason to believe that the Divine government was denied, and that mankind, given up to earthly and sensual pursuits, were indisposed to serious reasoning on religious truths. In such circumstances, God left not himself without witness; and, by the translation of his holy servant, threw off all obscurity from his government and its great results, and showed the wicked world that the man whom they had derided and refused to hear, was raised to heaven to be for ever with the Lord.

After this time little can be said for the religion of the old world. Methuselah, the son of Enoch, is supposed to have given Noah a name under the influence of a prophetic spirit: "And he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed." (Gen. v. 29.) There is some obscurity about these words which we have no hope of being able to remove. It seems, however, to have been the intention of Moses to teach us that, in giving a name to Noah, his father had some reference to what would take place in his life-time. But then it becomes a question, whether this language referred to the coming Flood, or to the agricultural improvements which Noah is supposed as a husbandman to have introduced. We think the former application of the words the correct one; and therefore, that the terms, "the ground which the Lord hath cursed," do not refer to the malediction pronounced in Paradise, but to some prophetic intimation of destruction which even before this time was given to mankind, and which was fulfilled in the Deluge.

And now man had filled up the measure of his ini-



quities : “And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt ; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me ; for the earth is filled with violence through them ; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.” (Gen. vi. 12, 13.) The fiat went forth, and the whole world of mankind, with all the results of their labour, and the productions of their genius, sank into one common ruin. Yet, in judgment He remembered mercy ; and as the earth contained one righteous man, the Lord saved him and his family from the common destruction, to show unto all ages that he discerneth between those that serve him, and those that serve him not.



## CHAPTER V.

## THE DELUGE.

REASON of the Calamity—Scriptural Account of it—Wickedness of Man—Faith of Noah—Form of the Ark—2 Peter ii. 5—Provision for the Safety of the lower Animals—The Catastrophe—The Release—OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED—Alleged Impossibility and Want of Necessity—Alleged Difficulty of accounting for the Quantity of Water—Alleged Want of historical Confirmation—PROOF TO THE CONTRARY—*Identity of Heathen Deities with the Noachian Family*—Osiris—Bacchus—Saturn—Uranus—Deucalion—Atlas—Oracles of Zoroaster—Theology of ancient Egypt—Hindu Triad—Greece and Rome—Persia—Scandinavia—*Sacred Names, Buildings, and Rites of the Heathen World*—Temple of Theba—Processions of the sacred Ship—Picture at Herculaneum—Symbolic Ark of Bacchus—*Historical and traditional Evidence*—Berosus—Lucian—Apamean Medal—Traditions of the Hindus—Chinese—Persians—Egyptians—Scandinavians—Jewish and Christian Testimonies—American Traditions—British Traditions—The Geologists, their Agreements, Differences, and Admissions—Necessity for the Scriptures—Value of corroborative historical Testimony.

WE have now to contemplate the most terrible infliction with which our world was ever visited; an infliction as extensive in its range, as it was destructive in its effects. The world had existed more than two thousand years, and had become exceedingly populous. On it God had sent showers of blessings, and given unnumbered displays of his goodness; but now he speaks the word, and it is subjected to wide and wasting ruin. Before we proceed to consider the important particulars included in the subject of the Deluge, it may be well distinctly to notice the immediate cause of this fearful calamity. The Flood did not destroy the world because its Maker had ceased to regard the workmanship of his hands, and to watch over the creatures to whom he had given existence; nor was it destroyed for his pleasure, or as a part of the purpose of his



will concerning it ; nor from any cause beyond the Divine control, by the law of an unalterable fate. No ; the world was destroyed by God, when he would have preserved it ; destroyed by him in the exercise of his Divine government and watchful care. The world was judicially destroyed on account of the sins of its inhabitants. No truth within the whole compass of revelation is more clearly enunciated than this. While, therefore, this great event exhibits the holiness and justice of God, and the moral responsibility of man, it speaks, in language not to be misunderstood, "Verily, there is a God that judgeth in the earth : " "The wicked shall not be unpunished." We call special attention to this fact, because a distinct recognition of its truth and influence, is, as we conceive, essential to a correct understanding of the subject. It is the great and prominent feature of the case. The Deluge may, and undoubtedly does, present to our view many curious and interesting, as well as grand and mysterious, subjects ; all worthy of careful research and serious attention. But, over all these, the fact to which we have adverted should cast the serious influence of its deep solemnity. The Flood was a Divine infliction, a punishment of sin. It exhibits the Divine government, shows the purity and justice of God, and places those attributes before us in energetic operation. We see the world corrupt and impure, and filled with violence ; the whole world sunk into the unmitigated darkness of error and iniquity. Or, if this darkness is at all broken, it is only by the piety and preaching of one individual man. We gaze in painful surprise on the moral desolation of the scene ; and while we look, the clouds of Divine vengeance gather, the floods descend, the unrighteous are swept away in one universal ruin, the whole earth is submerged in the mighty deep. But, amid all this vengeance, mercy to man is richly manifested in the preservation of the righteous family ; who, enclosed within the ark by the Divine appointment, float in safety over the watery expanse, and ultimately leave their sanctuary to occupy a renovated earth, and to supply it with a new series of inhabitants.



It is in this aspect that we propose to investigate this interesting subject.

Our first object will be to explain and illustrate the scripture narrative ; after which we shall furnish the corroborative evidence which is afforded by profane history ; adding such general observations as may be required.

The first intimation of the Divine purpose is communicated in these remarkable terms : “ And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth ; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air ; for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.” (Gen. vi. 5—8.)

It is impossible for a serious mind to read these words without being painfully affected by their serious peculiarity.

The testimony thus borne to the general character of mankind is not relieved by one single righteous feature. The thoughts of the heart are evil, unmixed evil in continual operation. From this unholy source flowed unmingled impurity of conduct. Men were wicked, their wickedness was great, and, as population increased, was going on at a fearful rate of progress. Religion did not exist, and sin reigned in uncontrolled dominion. No language can more fully exhibit this case, in all the depth and intensity of its evil, than the words of the sacred text just cited.

But the most remarkable part of this declaration is that which refers to the feelings and judgment of the Divine Mind on this lamentable state of things. We must, of course, admit that the language employed is used, to some extent, figuratively ; just as when eyes, ears, and hands are attributed to the Divine Being. God cannot change his mind, or be the subject of pain, which would, in the ordinary application of language, appear to be indicated by the terms “repented,” and “grieved him at his heart.” But



we greatly err if we allow our knowledge of this obvious fact to explain away or neutralize the meaning of this important portion of holy writ. The words are a part of inspired truth, chosen by the Holy Spirit to describe what took place on this momentous occasion; and they are replete with meaning, however difficult it may be in other or added terms to set forth this meaning more clearly. We are, however, plainly told that the great wickedness of the world was not only observed by the Divine Being, but that it made an impression, produced an effect, on His mind, which is best exhibited to our limited apprehension by the words we have quoted. Again: we are taught by this language, that even when Jehovah enters into judgment, he ceases not to be compassionate and merciful; but that the influence of these attributes does not prevent the exercise of His justice. We add a translation of the Septuagint rendering of this passage, which may aid us in entering more fully into its meaning than any lengthened observations: "And the Lord God having seen that the wicked actions of men were multiplied upon the earth, and that every one in his heart was intently brooding over evil continually, then God laid it to heart that he had made man upon the earth, and he pondered it deeply. And God said, I will blot out man whom I have made from the face of the earth, even man, with cattle, and reptiles, with flying creatures of the sky; for I am grieved that I have made them." \*

Immediately after the Divine purpose was thus declared, it was communicated to Noah: "And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark shall be three hun-

\* This, and most of the translations from the Septuagint which we may give in future pages, are taken from Bagster's English Version by Sir L. C. L. Brenton, Bart.



dred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it. And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die. But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee. And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female. Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive. And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather it to thee; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them." (Gen. vi. 13—21.)

We would pause a moment, to consider this communication as addressed to the holy man. How startling must the terrible announcement have been to him! The ordinary course of nature had been maintained up to this hour; the business, the pleasures, the follies of life were still pursued; no external sign prognosticated approaching calamity; yet the word of God declared it, and assured the pious patriarch that he was about to punish the sins of mankind by covering the world with universal ruin. Upon this testimony Noah was required—as the only means of safety to himself and his family, and, more than this, as the only way of entering into that *covenant* which God had promised to “establish” with him—to prepare the ark of the size and shape, and according to the directions, which he had received. Well, then, might the apostle say, “By *faith* Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark!” (Heb. xi. 7.) The world down to that day had never witnessed such an exercise of faith: it has seen few such since. Not only were all appearances and every external



reason against him, but he well knew that public opinion would denounce his obedience, and place him in avowed collision with a whole world, without a friend or a follower to aid or to counsel him; and yet, in such circumstances, Noah dared to believe, and accordingly the ark was built.

We have, however, principally to notice the Divine address to Noah, for the purpose of obtaining some definite ideas of the nature of the preparations which were to be made to meet this great calamity. We must first refer to the directions given for building the ark; for, as we are assured that they were fully carried out, they afford us a description of that remarkable vessel. On this subject a variety of opinions have been entertained; and every important word in the original account has been subjected to the most severe critical investigation. Yet, after all, nothing very material to the sense has been elicited, beyond what is conveyed by the authorized version. We will, however, notice a few of the most important of these criticisms, with such explanations as have been obtained. The word which our translators have rendered "ark" is **תבה** (*tēh-bāh*), and is only found in the Hebrew scriptures *in this place*, when speaking of that vessel in which the infant Moses was preserved. The term which was given as the name of the ark of the tabernacle and temple is entirely different, and is also used in describing the coffin of Joseph; at other times it is rendered "chest." From the word itself, therefore, we can obtain no idea respecting the construction or form of the ark built by Noah.

Again: the word which our translators have rendered "gopher," as indicating the kind of wood of which the ark was to be built, the LXX. have supposed to refer to the prepared shape of the material; and hence the command in their version reads, "Make thee an ark of square timber." Various other explanations have been given. According to Vossius, the term refers to the timber of those trees which shoot out quadrangular branches in the same horizontal line, such as fir, pine, cedar, &c. By Jerome, in the Vulgate, it is rendered "smoothed or planed timber;" by Aben Ezra and Kimchi, "light floating wood." By Parkhurst it is



regarded as signifying nothing more than a general name for such trees as abound with resinous, inflammable juices. Other opinions have obtained ; but nothing certain is known on the subject.

The form of the ark has also been a point of dispute ; about which the most singular, and, we might almost say, the most absurd, opinions have been circulated. These have been called forth in consequence of the authors drawing their views, not from the description given by Moses, but from what they have been pleased to consider necessary for the circumstances in which the ark was placed. As many of these suppositions have been unreasonable, the results have been equally so. One learned writer regards the ark as a square, extending over a space equal to that covered by the base of the Great Pyramid of Egypt, or the area of Lincoln's Inn Fields in London ; and being at least six hundred and twenty-five English feet on each side. We have already intimated our opinion that, in order to form a correct view of this subject, we should adhere to the scriptural account : if any further justification of this course is needed, it is furnished by the fact, (which invests it with special importance,) that this account is given as containing directions for building the vessel. It is not a partial description of it after it had been constructed, but the identical verbal plan from which it was made.

If we look simply at the directions given to Noah, whatever difficulty may arise as to some minute particulars, there can be none as to the general form of the ark. We are told that it was to be three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high : this at once presents to the mind the idea of an oblong square body, thirty cubits high. What objection can exist to our receiving this as the exact truth ? But, we are told, it must have had a bottom formed like the hull of a ship, or it would not sail, or, as it is termed, "live," in a tempestuous sea. But to this it may be replied, Where are we informed that the ark was intended to resist tempestuous waves, or to make way through the waters ? It was to swim, to float on the water ; but not to



pass from one part of the world to another. It had, consequently, neither masts, sails, oars, nor helm : it was, in fact, a floating house ; and hence the specific part of the directions applies to the proportions which were important to its steadiness while floating, and to the means of rendering it water-proof. Mr. Taylor has shown it to be very probable that in form and construction it resembled the houses in the East, only on a large scale.\* This appears to be the plain and obvious meaning of this important passage. Much ingenuity, mechanical skill, and first-rate workmanship, would undoubtedly be required in such an erection. These, there can be no doubt, Noah had at his command ; and, with them, the directions of Jehovah could be worked out ; and such a hollow body, built on a strong frame-work firmly floored, and, of course, not fastened to the ground, but merely resting on it, would rise and float with the prevailing waters ; and, as they retired, would again ground in quiet security.

There are, however, two or three obscure phrases in this account. We read, "A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above." (Verse 16.)

The latter part of this passage has been sometimes applied to the ark itself, and regarded as pointing out in some way the rising of the roof for the purpose of throwing off the water. The Septuagint makes no mention of the window, and renders the words, "Thou shalt narrow the ark in making it, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above." But as the word which our English translation renders "window," literally means "a transparency," it is probable that it alludes to some means of admitting light into this capacious magazine. Hence some critics read the words, "And in a cubit shalt thou finish it above," thus,—which, they say,—is the literal rendering, "'Even to the support shalt thou extend it, from the rising,' or 'from the elevations ;' meaning, perhaps, 'It shall extend from end to end of the ark, except where intercepted by the finishing posts

\* See TAYLOR'S Edition of CALMET'S Dictionary, article *Ark*.



at the ends, and by those strong timbers which, running up the sides, join others in the roof.'''\* If we were disposed to speculate on this subject, we should venture to say, that the roof of the ark was raised in the middle, and that the sides of it projected over the perpendicular sides of the ark, leaving an interval of a cubit in height for the purpose of giving light and ventilation to the interior of the building. But this is uncertain.

There can be no doubt that the ark was one of the most remarkable vessels which were ever constructed. Taking the cubit at 21.888 inches, the length which the elaborate investigations of Mr. Greaves has rendered most probable, then the ark would be five hundred and forty-seven feet long, ninety-one feet two inches wide, and forty-seven feet two inches high. This is nearly three times the length of a first-rate man-of-war in the British navy; a colossal fabric, the erection of which would require the exercise of the most perfect scientific, as well as practical, knowledge. The fact that the construction of this vessel was effected by human skill and energy, affords ample proof of the cultivation of mathematical and mechanical science at that period.

The purpose of God having been formed and declared to Noah, holy scripture informs us that it was made known to afford the wicked antediluvians a motive to repentance. The religious aspect of this circumstance is important. The scripture narrative informs us of the measures adopted to secure the preservation of the family of Noah, without affording any information respecting the nature of the communications made to the great mass of mankind, who were living in sin and under impending danger. The New-Testament scriptures, however, cast some light on this subject. Peter tells us that God "spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly." (2 Peter ii. 5.) From this text it appears evident, that Noah not only exhibited a

\* TAYLOR'S Edition of CALMET'S Dictionary, article *Ark*.



pious life to his ungodly contemporaries, but that he actually preached to them. This term, in the sense in which it was used by the apostles, implies a making known the will of God, and, more than that, an earnest and fervent entreaty and exhortation that this will should be complied with and submitted to by mankind. It is plain, therefore, that Noah announced the Divine will to the people of his day: they were not kept in ignorance of the Divine purpose, or of the threatened judgment; but, on the contrary, were instructed and warned. This is confirmed by the language of the same apostle, when he says, "The long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing." (1 Peter iii. 20.)

Here, then, we have before us a scene unequalled in the annals of the world. We see a widely-spread population throwing off the restraints of Divine government, and giving themselves up to unmitigated and continual wickedness. God observes this prevailing depravity, selects one holy man from the multitude of mankind, and promises him deliverance, whilst he announces his purpose to destroy the whole world in a flood of waters. This favoured individual is made acquainted with the Divine purpose, and is instructed to build an ark "for the saving of his house." He obeys:—the building is erected according to the plan which the God of heaven had marked out. But whilst this is in a course of being done, and the colossal ark is rising up before the children of men, they are not allowed to remain ignorant of its design and their danger. The delay of judgment does not take place that the thunder-stroke of vengeance may fall with more terrible effect. No; it is a merciful delay; it is "long-suffering." For, while the ark is preparing, the builder has another object besides the construction of its mighty frame-work. He is a preacher of righteousness, and at once apprizes his fellow-men of their danger, and urges them to repentance, that they may escape. Yet in vain! The building is completed, and the world remains impenitent. He whose eyes saw, and whose heart felt, the full amount of human iniquity and perverseness, has told



us, "They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark." (Luke xvii. 27.) There was no effect produced by the declaration of the Divine word. Unlike the inhabitants of Nineveh when Jonah preached, the antediluvians pursued their round of sensual pleasure and gratification until the day came. There was not sufficient faith in their hearts to induce a pause even for a day. How terrible the consideration!

But the narrative proceeds. The ark was finished: Noah had done "all that God commanded him." (Gen. vi. 22.) "And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark. Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female. Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth." (Gen. vii. 1—3.) And Noah obeyed, and himself and his wife, and Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and the three wives of his sons with them, entered into the ark: "They, and every beast after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, and every fowl after his kind, every bird of every sort. And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life. And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and the Lord shut him in." (Verses 13—16.)

What a mighty display of Divine power and providence do these words exhibit! The ark being finished, Noah and his sons, with their wives, are commanded to go into it. And then the animals, chosen and marshalled by the power of God, are conducted to the ark. We are sometimes tauntingly asked, "How could Noah collect specimens of all the different tribes of animals, and conduct them to the ark?" The scriptural reply is, Not at all. Nothing of the kind was done or attempted. The narrative distinctly informs us that they "went in unto Noah." (Verse 9.) The same Almighty Influence which brought them to Adam to be named, led them to Noah to be saved. If the patriarch did



any thing in this matter, it was to select the different creatures by pairs, or by sevens, according to the Divine commandment. If, in the case of Balaam, "the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet;" (2 Peter ii. 16;) how much more effectually must the gathering of these herds of animals, assembling together and seeking admittance into the ark, have reproved the blind impenitency of the entire generation of mankind, who, although repeatedly warned, persisted in their rebellion against God, and, reckless of consequences, dared to continue in their sin!

We can scarcely contemplate a more signal phenomenon in the whole history of humanity than is here presented. Earth and heaven smiled in placid complacency; every thing remained as it had been from the beginning. Yet a man, whose life was holy, declared that he had been specially warned of God to prepare an ark, that he, his family, and a selection from the different tribes of animals, might be saved from the universal ruin, which God, by means of a flood of waters, had announced that he would bring upon the earth. Through faith in this word, an ark was built, Noah and his family go into it, the various tribes of living creatures congregate about it, the ferocity of lions and tigers is subdued, and beasts of every kind, obedient to the Divine impulse, seek the appointed means of security. This important object being secured, the Lord shut them in. We are not informed when this took place; but from the whole account we think it likely that it transpired on the sabbath. However this may be, nothing remarkable immediately resulted. Day after day passed away, the world pursuing its wonted course of sensual pleasure, while those within the ark committed themselves to the care and compassion of God. Seven days elapsed in this manner; and who can tell how many profane jests, how much insolent mockery, were perpetrated during this period, by the ungodly mass, on account of the course taken by the pious patriarch? Who can tell how his faith, and that of those who were with him, was exercised? And then came the terrible catastrophe! Perhaps,



when Noah, and his family, and the various classes of animals, went into the ark, there did exist some apprehension in the public mind ; the people might have had some doubts whether the preaching of the man of God would be verified ; but when the day passed away without alarm, when the next morning arose in all its brightness and beauty, and day after day followed in regular course, we may well believe that these apprehensions were gradually dissipated, and mankind confirmed in their wickedness.

Thus the week passed, the sabbath returned. The pious few in the ark worshipped God, the impenitent without rioted in their sin ; when the heavens gathered blackness, the floods descended, the fountains of the great deep were broken up ; the whole day,—the whole night,—day after day,—the rains descended ; until at length the valleys were flooded, and the waters gradually ascended to the plains. Then men began to be alarmed ; but there was neither respite nor consolation. Still the waters rose, villages were covered, cities were overthrown : men crowded to hills and mountains for refuge ; but in vain. The waters prevailed, until every high hill under heaven was covered. And all flesh died ! The whole human family was destroyed, and every beast perished. Meanwhile, the ark, borne up by the prevailing waters, floated over the watery expanse. What an awful period in the history of man ! A world in ruins,—a single family shut up in a floating tabernacle ! And this event was not the work of a day : it seemed as if God was determined to magnify his power in this awful visitation. Forty days and forty nights did the rain descend ; and still the ark continued to float over the waters. What a season of desolation and trial ! Five months did the waters prevail ; so long did the ark float upon their surface ; until, on the seventeenth day of the seventh month, one hundred and fifty days after the beginning of the flood, the ark rested on Mount Ararat ; proving to Noah and his family that the substantial framework of the earth still remained, and thereby affording them a hope of deliverance from their solitary abode.

But the retiring of the waters was much less rapid than



their rise. Although the water had never risen more than fifteen cubits above the highest mountains, yet nearly three months elapsed from the time the ark had rested upon Ararat before the tops of the mountains were seen. Forty days longer did Noah wait, and he sent forth a raven, which flew to and fro, but was not received again into the ark. He also sent forth a dove, which, finding no resting-place, returned, and was taken into the ark. After seven days Noah sent forth the dove a second time, when it came back bringing "an olive leaf pluckt off;" thus affording evidence that the earth retained her vegetable productiveness, and that her verdure was already becoming apparent. After another week the dove was sent forth again; but it returned no more. And Noah, knowing from this circumstance that the waters had disappeared, "removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry." This took place on the first day of the first month. "And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, God spake unto Noah, saying, Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee. Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee, of all flesh, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth. And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him: every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, and whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark." (Gen. viii. 14—19.) Thus the great purpose of God was completed, the world of wickedness destroyed, and a righteous seed preserved.

It is remarkable that Noah and his family continued in the ark exactly a year. The present Hebrew text makes it a year and ten days; telling us that the flood began on the seventeenth day of the second month in one year, and that the ark was vacated on the twenty-seventh day of the second month in the following year. But this is contradicted by the Septuagint; which we have already stated to be, in our



judgment, a superior authority in regard of chronological numbers. In this case several writers have believed the fact, although, by adhering to the Hebrew, they have failed to account for it. Dr. Adam Clarke, for instance, contends that Noah remained in the ark three hundred and sixty-five days, exactly a solar year. But he supposes the Hebrew year to be made up of twelve months, half of them being thirty days, and the others twenty-nine days, each ; and that the eleven days in the next year supplied the deficiency. To this plan there is this obvious objection,—that when certain Hebrew months contained twenty-nine days, while others had thirty, it arose from an effort to adapt lunar months to a solar year ; and as the lunar month was twenty-nine days and a half, they called one month thirty days, and the following one twenty-nine only. But it is proved that this was not the chronologic notation of Noah ; for it is said distinctly that from the seventeenth day of the second month, to the seventeenth day of the seventh month, was one hundred and fifty days, making exactly five consecutive months of thirty days each. Besides, there is good reason for believing that this usage of lunar months was adopted by the Jews in the latter part of their history ; and that originally they used the primitive year of three hundred and sixty-five days, composed of twelve months, with five days added to the end of the year, which were reckoned as belonging to the twelfth month.

According to the Septuagint, then, we understand that the Flood began on the twenty-seventh day of the second month ; that it rained forty days and forty nights ; that after a hundred and fifty days the ark rested on the mountains of Ararat, on the twenty-seventh day of the seventh month ; that on the first day of the tenth month the tops of the mountains were seen ; and that, after the lapse of four months, and twenty-seven days more, in which the waters abated and the earth was dried, Noah left his sanctuary on the twenty-seventh day of the second month, having been in the ark exactly one year.

We have thus, following the scripture account, narrated



the principal circumstances of this tremendous event. We need not be surprised if the mind, when contemplating such details, should shrink back into doubting incredulity, and hesitate to receive as truth such revolting records. A ruin so universal and complete, a display of Divine justice so rigidly enforced, a class of truths which places mankind in such immediate contact with the moral attributes of the Almighty God, can never, in the nature of things, be acceptable to the human mind. We might, therefore, reasonably expect that these circumstances would be flatly denied by the open scoffer; and be cavilled at, and, if possible, explained away, by those who profess to be *rational* believers in the verities of holy scripture. Such has been abundantly the result. We have therefore thought it most desirable to throw our illustrations of this subject into the form of a defence of its most important facts. In doing this, it may be advisable to follow the line of division adopted by those who have impugned the scriptural narrative. Their objections have generally turned upon three points: 1. The want of any direct history of a Deluge by the profane writers of antiquity; 2. The apparent impossibility of accounting for the quantity of water necessary to overflow the whole earth; and, 3. The absence of any apparent necessity for an universal deluge, as the same result might have been accomplished by a partial one.

We will now direct attention to these objections, beginning with the last.

Vossius may be regarded as the leader in this line of objection: he pronounces the universality of the Deluge "impossible and unnecessary."

This objection is based upon the assumed fact, that at that period the population of the world was very limited in number, and confined to a small portion of the surface of the earth. It may be worth inquiry whether this assumption be correct. We have already intimated our opinion as to the unsatisfactory character of the calculations usually made with respect to population. But if we cannot depend upon the application of abstract principles, we may surely



gather some information from a comparison of similar facts arising in different times.

We have expressed our belief that the Flood took place in the year of the world 2262. Now let us glance at the population of the earth as many years after the Flood : this brings us to the year B.C. 953. It may at first sight be supposed that advantage is gained to our argument by the adoption of the extended chronology of the Septuagint ; but it is not so. If the abridged system of the Masorite numbers be adopted, we shall be carried down to the year B.C. 692. Now, it will be evident that, whichever of these numbers our readers may be disposed to adopt, they will see the impossibility of confining the existing population to a limited district, which might be inundated for a year without affecting the general surface of the globe. At that time population had extended from Armenia to China and India in the East, and to Italy, Spain, and Africa in the West. Assyria had attained the summit of her power, and Tyre the zenith of her commercial prosperity. At such a time, could the countless myriads of mankind have been cooped up in a corner, and destroyed by a partial deluge, without affecting the general surface of the earth ? In our judgment, it is an insult to common sense to press the question. But it may be urged, that, as the antediluvians lived much longer before they had children than their postdiluvian successors, the population, in any given number of centuries, must have been less. We think not. For if the parents were older at the birth of their first children, they lived longer contemporaneously with their descendants ; a circumstance which will abundantly compensate for any apparent advantage which might arise from that cause. But we are so confident of the utter worthlessness of this objection, that we are able to make concessions which are not justly due to our opponents. Let us, then, take an equal number of generations. In doing this, however, it must be observed that we do injustice to our argument ; for at the birth of his eldest son, Noah was about three times the age of his predecessors when in similar circumstances. Jared, at the birth of his



first son, was one hundred and sixty-two; Enoch, one hundred and sixty-five; Methuselah, one hundred and eighty-seven; and Lamech, one hundred and eighty-eight; while Noah was five hundred years old at the birth of the eldest of those sons who were saved with him in the ark. Yet, although the increase of three hundred years is thus given up, we take the ten generations following the Deluge, and this brings us to the close of the life of Abraham. And we call attention to the population of the world in his day; when the whole of the countries from the extreme east to Egypt were studded with cities, when established sovereignties were formed in different and distant parts of the world; and we repeat our question, Could these multitudes, under any circumstances, have been located in any one given district? Could this have been inundated for twelve months without affecting the other parts of the earth? In our judgment, the supposition is absurd.\*

Still we are disposed to ask, What is gained by the objection? We are told it was impossible. Is any thing impossible with God? Is the infliction of an universal deluge more difficult to Infinite Power, than the building up of a heap of waters to drown any particular locality? In what does the impossibility consist? We ascribe the Deluge to a miraculous exertion of Divine Power; we will not argue with those who deny this: and if our position thus far is admitted, we do not see the propriety of using the word "impossible." It was no more impossible to drown the whole world, than it was to make it.

But we are told that it was "unnecessary." We wish to meet with respect an objection urged by learned and pious men; but we are anxious to know the precise meaning of this language. What are we to understand by the assertion that a universal deluge was unnecessary? We have only to regard the Flood, whatever were its limits, as the result of the Divine purpose. The nature and extent of this purpose

\* We may notice here the similar command given to Adam and to Noah, "Be fruitful and multiply," &c. (Gen. i. 28; viii. 17,) as justifying the comparison.



we can only gather from a careful perusal of His own revealed truth. If we turn to this, we are told that God said unto Noah, "Behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die." (Gen. vi. 17.) Here we have not only the destruction of all the human species; the animal creation is also included in the malediction: and, consequently, Noah is commanded to bring into the ark with him two of every sort, *to keep them alive*. Accordingly, "they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life." (Gen. vii. 15.) These were saved; while, of those not admitted into the ark, it is said, "And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man." (Verse 21.) We do not contend that there was an abstract necessity for a universal deluge. We learn the Divine purpose from the word of God; and this informs us that it was the intention of Jehovah to destroy all animal life, except that which was taken into the ark. No language can more plainly set forth this purpose than that which we have quoted. If it is not so explicit to those who take a different view of the subject, we request them to point out the ambiguity, and to correct it. Let them give us language which more clearly declares the important fact, that all animal life not contained in the ark was to die by the Flood: but if no such language can be framed, then we must be allowed to retain our opinion, that Moses intended to teach us this fact, and that his teaching is true.

But the words of the sacred narrative refer as distinctly to the entire surface of the earth, as to the whole animal creation: "And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered." (Verse 19.) We ask, What language can be more explicit than this? And yet it has been contended that this "earth under the whole heaven" means a small and limited locality in central Asia; and that "all



the high hills, that were under the whole heaven," means no hills at all! that the water did not cover the hills, but only inundated a low district! And this is put forth to sustain the Bible against the objections of free-thinkers, against "profane and vain babblings and oppositions of science, falsely so called!" We blush to see such criticisms from men holding the office of Christian teachers. We say, fearlessly and deliberately, that the truth of the Bible is not worth sustaining by these means. If such a line of defence and exposition be necessary, the book requiring it cannot give a certain sound, or be regarded with confidence as an unerring teacher. Give us the unquestioned right to use these canons of interpretation, and we will engage to prove any proposition, however monstrous or absurd, by quotations from the pages of scripture.

But what is gained by this forced and unnatural construction of the sacred narrative? Is it more natural to suppose that God should pile up a mountain of waters on Armenia, than that he should do what he threatened,—drown the whole world? Is it more congruous to suppose that Noah should have been commanded to build an ark, the largest floating vessel ever constructed, and to have collected and preserved in it a great number of animals and fowls in pairs, when only a small territory was intended to be inundated, than to believe that the whole earth was covered with water?

We seriously object to follow the advocates of a partial deluge, in pronouncing what is necessary or unnecessary, where Infinite Wisdom and Infinite Power are engaged. When God propounds his purpose, it seems profane for man to judge of its suitability or propriety. Yet, if we were to follow the example of those whose opinions we controvert, we would direct special attention to two particulars. We are told that a universal deluge was unnecessary. We ask, Can any thing be conceived more unnecessary than the erection of the ark, and the crowding it with living animals, if a few waggons and the journey of a few days would have effected the object designed? Why, in such a



case, was not Noah, like Abraham afterward, called of God to leave his father's house, and to journey into another land? Such a pilgrimage as that taken by the latter patriarch would, according to the theory of a partial deluge, have abundantly sufficed to carry Noah to a place of safety. Should those whose scheme is open to such objections talk to us of what is unnecessary? \* But, not satisfied with this, they tell us that it is impossible; and then we are expected to believe that a certain district is inundated, and that the waters are piled up for this purpose. It will not be attempted to show that there is any district of sufficient compass to be the theatre of this great event, which could be completely inundated without the interposition of miraculous power. Yet the persons who talk of *impossibilities* expect us to believe that a certain locality is covered with a heap of waters; that on this the ark floats without sliding down on the one side or the other; but continues swimming on its watery elevation until it finally rests on the top of a *mountain*!

We take the scripture narrative in its plain and obvious sense, as unquestionably teaching that the whole earth was submerged in water. "All the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered." "All the high hills under the whole heaven." The language labours to convey the idea of geographical universality; but mountains are the highest hills; and yet these were covered with fifteen cubits of water.

But it is urged, secondly, "Whence came such immense quantities of water? And what became of it afterwards?" Now, suppose we should simply and frankly reply, that we cannot tell; how would our ignorance affect the scriptural statement? The Bible teaches us, that the Deluge was

\* Dr. Pye Smith, while labouring to show that a universal deluge was unnecessary, expresses his "humble opinion" that the population of the antediluvian world "was really small, that it was in a course of rapid progress towards an extreme reduction, which would have issued in a not very distant extinction." And so a *partial deluge* was necessary to destroy the few men who remained, before they all died off!



effected by a special interposition of Divine power, for the accomplishment of a great moral purpose ; it was therefore miraculous ; and those who believe in the Deluge in any other sense, do not receive the scriptural testimony. Are we, then, to reject the scriptural relation of a miracle, unless we can, on natural principles, account for the manner in which it took place ? When the Jordan was divided for the Israel of God to pass over, what was it that kept the congregated mass of fluid in a heap ? Are we expected to describe this, or to say that it was impossible ?

But the difficulties connected with a universal Deluge are not so great as has been represented.

It appears that the quantity of water necessary for this purpose has been greatly exaggerated. An eminent author, to whom reference has been already made, supposes that water sufficient to cover the earth to a depth of five and a half miles above the present level of the sea, would be required to cover all the mountains of the earth. And yet this same writer, in endeavouring to account for the partial deluge which he advocates, supposes “an elevation of the bed of the Persian and Indian seas, or a subsidence of the inhabited land toward the south ;” while the draining of the submerged district is supposed to have been effected by “a return of the bed of the sea to a lower level, or by the elevation of some tracts of land, which would leave channels and slopes for the larger part of the water to flow back into the Indian Ocean.” \*

Now we have nothing to say against this hypothesis in the abstract ; but we have reason to object to its exclusive application. The supposition that ocean-beds were raised, and high lands sunk, is sufficient, if admitted, to make any doctrine of the Deluge plausible. Like a suit of chain-armour, it stretches over every part of a scheme, and wards off opposition as it arises. But it is manifestly unjust for such persons to argue, against the literal interpretation of the scripture narrative, that it would require five miles’

\* DR. PYE SMITH on Scripture and Geology, p. 304.



depth of water to deluge the earth; and then, when accounting for a favourite mode, to take the liberty of sinking mountains, raising ocean-beds, and abolishing difficulties, as if a monopoly of some almighty mechanism was guaranteed for *their* special private advantage.

We have no wish to dwell on this subject; but simply observe, that, if it is a fact, clearly ascertained by careful observation, that large districts of country have greatly altered their elevation, that even the Andes\* have been so affected; then we think some caution is necessary when men speak of the quantity of water requisite to submerge the earth five thousand years ago.

We transcribe the following observations on this point from the pen of an eminent scientific writer: "It will be deemed a sufficient allowance, when we suppose the waters of the Deluge to have been four miles deep on the surface of the ground. Now, it is certain that water, or any other matter, when spread out at large upon the ground, seems to occupy an immense space in comparison to that which it does when contained in a cubical vessel, or when packed together in a cubical form. A cube of ten miles of water would very nearly overflow two hundred and fifty-six square miles of plain ground to the height of four miles. But if we take into account the vast number of eminences with which the surface of the earth abounds, the above-mentioned quantity of water would cover a great deal more. If, therefore, we attempt to calculate the quantity of water sufficient to deluge the earth, we must make a very considerable allowance for the bulk of all the hills upon its surface. But, to consider the matter in its utmost latitude, the surface of the earth is supposed by the latest computations to contain about 199,512,595 square miles. In order to overflow this surface to the height of four miles, there is required

\* "Reflecting on the proofs in our possession, of the local revolutions that have happened, on the site of each port, within the last century and a half, our conceptions must be greatly exalted respecting the magnitude of the alterations which the country between the Andes and the sea may have undergone, even in the course of the last six thousand years."—LYELL'S "Principles of Geology," vol. iii. p. 273.



a parallelopiped of water sixteen miles deep, and containing 49,878,148 square miles of surface. Now, considering the immense thickness of the globe of the earth, it is by no means improbable that this quantity of water might be contained in its bowels, without the necessity for any remarkable abyss or huge collection of water, such as most of our theorists suppose to exist in the centre. It is certain that, as far as the earth has been mined, it has been found not dry, but moist; nor have we any reason to imagine that it is not at least equally moist to the centre. How moist it really is, cannot be known; nor can the quantity of water requisite to impart to it the degree of moisture it has, be ascertained; but we are certain it must be immense. It was not, however, from the bowels of the earth alone that the waters were discharged, but also from the air; for we are assured by Moses that it rained forty days and forty nights. But this source of the diluvian waters has been considered as of small consequence by almost every one who has written on the subject.

“With reference to this subject, we must observe, however, that there is a very general mistake with regard to the air, similar to that above-mentioned regarding the earth. Because the earth below our feet appears to our senses firm and compact, therefore the vast quantity of water contained even in the most solid parts of it, and which will readily appear on proper experiment, is overlooked. In like manner, because the air does not always deluge with excessive rains, it is also imagined that it contains but little water. Because the pressure of the air is able to raise only thirty-two feet of water on the surface of the earth, it is therefore supposed that we may ascertain to what depth the atmosphere would deluge the earth if it was to discharge the *whole* water contained in it. *But we know that the pressure of the atmosphere has not the least connexion with the quantity of water which it contains.* Nay, if there is any connexion, the air, as exhibited by the barometer, seems to be lightest when it contains most water. For these reasons we think that the quantity of water contained in the whole atmosphere ought



to be considered as indefinite, especially as we know that by whatever agent it is suspended, that agent must counteract the force of gravity, otherwise the water would immediately descend.

“The above considerations render it at least probable that there is in nature a quantity of water sufficient to deluge the world, provided it were applied to that purpose. We must now consider whether there be any natural agent powerful enough to effect this purpose; and we shall take the phrases used by Moses in their most obvious sense. The breaking up of the fountains of the deep we may reasonably suppose to have been the opening of all passages, whether great or small, through which the subterranean waters could possibly discharge themselves on the surface of the earth. The opening of the windows of heaven we may also suppose to be the pouring out of the water contained in the atmosphere, through those invisible passages by which it enters in such a manner as to elude our senses, as when water is absorbed by the air in evaporation. As both these are said to have been opened at the same time, it seems probable that one natural agent was employed to do both. Now it is certain that the industry of modern inquiry has discovered an agent unknown to former ages, the influence of which is so great, that, with regard to this world, it may be said to possess a kind of omnipotence. The agent which we mean is electricity. It is certain, that by its means immense quantities of water can be raised to a great height in the air. This is clearly proved by the phenomena of water-spouts. Mr. Forster relates, that he happened to see one break very near him, and observed a flash of lightning to proceed from it at the moment of its breaking. The conclusion from all this is obvious. When the electric matter was discharged from the water, it could no longer be supported by the atmosphere, but immediately descended. Though water-spouts do not often appear in this country, yet every one must have made an observation somewhat similar to Mr. Forster's. In a violent storm of thunder and rain, after every flash of lightning, or discharge of electricity



from the clouds, the rain pours down with increased violence ; thus showing, that the cloud, having parted with so much of its electricity, cannot longer be supported in the form of vapour, but must descend in rain. It is not, indeed, yet discovered that electricity is the cause of the suspension of water in the atmosphere ; but it is certain that evaporation is promoted by electrifying the fluid to be evaporated. It may, therefore, be admitted as a possibility, that the electric fluid contained in the air may be the agent by which it is enabled to suspend the water which rises in vapour. If, therefore, the air be deprived of the due proportion of this fluid, it is evident that rain must fall in prodigious quantities.

“ Again : we are assured, from the most undeniable observations, that electricity is able to swell up water on the surface of the earth. This we can make it do even in our trifling experiments ; and much more must the whole force of the fluid be supposed capable of doing it, if applied to the waters of the ocean, or to any others. The agitation of the sea in earthquakes is a sufficient proof of this. It is certain that at these times there is a discharge of a vast quantity of electric matter from the earth into the air ; and that as soon as this happens, all becomes quiet on the surface of the earth.

“ From a multitude of observations, it also appears that there is at all times a passage of electric matter from the atmosphere into the earth, and, *vice versâ*, from the earth into the atmosphere. There is therefore no absurdity in supposing the Deity to have influenced the action of the natural powers in such a manner, that, for forty days and forty nights, the electric matter contained in the atmosphere should descend into the bowels of the earth ; (if indeed there be any necessity for supposing any such immediate influence at all ; since it is not impossible that there might have been, from some natural cause, a descent occasioned ;) the consequence would be, the breaking open of the fountains of the deep, and the opening of the windows of heaven. The water contained in the atmosphere, being left without sup-



port, would descend in impetuous rains ; whilst the waters of the ocean, those from which fountains originate, and those contained in the solid earth itself, would rise from the very centre to meet the waters which descended from above. Thus the breaking up of the fountains of the deep, and the opening of the windows of heaven, would accompany each other, as Moses tells us they actually did ; for, according to him, both happened at the same time.

“In this manner the Flood would come on gradually, without that violence to the globe which Burnet, Whiston, and other theorists, are obliged to suppose. The abatement of the waters would ensue on the ascent of the electric fluid ; the atmosphere would then absorb the waters as formerly ; that which had ascended through the earth would again subside ; and thus every thing would return to its former state.” \*

We do not pretend to say that the Deluge must have occurred in this manner. But we think it will be admitted that this great event might have been thus effected. At least, it shows that an ample magazine of means is at the disposal of the great Governor of the universe, which, directed by his wisdom, and wielded by his power, would be amply sufficient to produce the effects which his word has described.

Other objections to a universal Deluge have been urged. Some have contended that such a deluge must inevitably have destroyed all vegetation. But this is contradicted by fact. In the vicinage of the mountain on which the ark first grounded, vegetation was not destroyed : why, then, should any one attempt to infer its destruction from the circumstance of the Deluge having been universal ? The dove brought back an olive-leaf plucked off ; a proof that, even in the only district which, according to these objectors, was submerged, vegetation still continued.

We dismiss this part of the subject with a single observation,—that, considering the Flood as an act of the Divine government, devised and executed for a very special purpose, and its tremendous magnitude and consequences,

\* *Encyclopædia Britannica*, article *Deluge*.



there appears to be less difficulty in conceiving an idea of the means by which it was accomplished, than might reasonably have been expected.

We have now to refer to the only leading class of objections which have not been noticed; namely, the want of a sufficient historical attestation of the Deluge by profane authors and nations.

On this point we are willing to give the objection the greatest possible weight. We readily admit that, if a universal Deluge did take place, as recorded in the scriptures, it is not only reasonable to suppose that the several families of mankind would have preserved some historical notices and traditionary accounts of the awful catastrophe, but that the entire absence of this would be entitled to great weight in the investigation of the subject.

But what are the facts of the case? When we come to investigate the history and traditions of remote antiquity, and to unravel the mythological fables and apparently unmeaning rites of Pagan theology, instead of finding no allusions to the Deluge, we are actually oppressed with their enormous number and varied character. They meet us in every conceivable form. In the catalogues of deities, in the doctrines of religion, in sacred rites and ceremonies, as well as in historical and traditional notices, the ancient religion and literature of the world are full of evidences of the Flood.

No subject is more obscure than the true origin and proper character of the Heathen deities. If we felt disposed for such an investigation, this would not be a suitable place for the inquiry. Yet it is necessary to observe that the earliest idolatry of which we have any knowledge, consisted in a worship of the heavenly bodies, or of eminent and distinguished men after their decease, or of both these combined. Attributes therefore which are applicable only to the sun or moon, are found in connexion with those which could only have belonged to a deceased hero, in the character and worship of the same deity. But even amid the perplexity and confusion in which the subject is involved, we can adduce ample evidence that the leading deities of the



Heathen world stood in intimate relation to the persons preserved in the ark. Hence we find the prominent features of the life and character of Noah incorporated with the history and attributes of Osiris, Bacchus, Saturn, Uranus, Deucalion, Minos, Janus, Bore, and many other deities, worshipped in the Heathen world.

We will furnish some brief proofs of this. Osiris was harassed and persecuted by Typhon, which Banier \* explains as signifying the opposition of the principle of all evil to that of good. But the circumstances connected with this history fully explain the application of it. Plutarch has written a very curious account of this deity, and given some particulars which clearly identify Osiris with Noah. He relates that Typhon formed an ark or coffer of beautiful and exquisite workmanship, in which he shut up Osiris. "Every man admired this fine piece of workmanship, and Typhon in a merry mood promised to bestow it upon him whose body would fill it." † Having secretly taken the measure and proportions of the person of Osiris before the coffer was exhibited, he invited the god to enter it, and then he and his accomplices let down the lid upon him, which they fastened with nails and melted lead: after which they conveyed it away, and threw it into the sea. He says it was afterwards cast ashore on the coast of Byblus by the waves or tide.

The case of Bacchus is equally clear. When attacked by powerful enemies, he took refuge in the Erythrean Sea, in which at one time he is reported to have been preserved by a sea deity; ‡ at others, to have been saved in an ark. He taught the people to plant the vine, and to preserve the juice of the grape, and to lay up the fruits of the earth in proper repositories. Those who possessed a harsh or ungenial soil, not adapted to the cultivation of the vine, were shown the art of making a drink from barley not less grateful than that which proceeded from the grape. He is represented as of the highest antiquity.§

\* "Mythology," vol. i. p. 495.

† *Isis et Osiris*.

‡ *Iliad*, lib. vi.

§ DIODORUS SICULUS, lib. iv.



Saturn is also identified with Noah. This is supported by the authority of Bochart and Stillingfleet, and justified by many remarkable co-incidences of character. Saturn was said to be the common parent of mankind; so was Noah. Saturn was a just king; Noah, a righteous man. The golden age of Saturn was the period of Noah's government after the Flood. In the time of Saturn, men and even beasts are said to have had one language: in the time of Noah there was but one language. To pass over other points: Saturn and his wife Rhea are said to have been born of Thetis, or the ocean, in allusion to the preservation of Noah and his family in the ark; hence a ship was the symbol of Saturn.\*

The Sibylline oracles identify Uranus with the same patriarch. Deucalion's flood, his preservation in an ark, and his sending out a dove, together with the fact that himself and his wife became the progenitors of a new race of mortals, prove that he also is the same with Noah. The like identity might be exhibited at length in respect of many other deities. But these will suffice to show that, in the worship of their deified heroes, the character of Noah, and the prominent circumstances of his life, were recognised and celebrated among the Heathen. Hence many early Christian and even classic authors regarded those several deities either as different representations of the same being, or as different beings, all of whom were supposed to have been invested, more or less, with the same character and associated with the same circumstances.

It is worthy of observation, that, in the developements of Heathen fable, we have references not only to the great patriarch himself, but also to the entire number of persons preserved in the ark. We will cite the case of Atlas.

We are told that "this man had seven daughters, and that he was a king of Arcadia. His daughters were afterward placed among the stars by the name of Pleiades." †

\* *Origines Sacrae*, vol. ii. p. 208; FABER'S "Mysteries of the Cabiri," vol. ii. p. 246.

† DION HALICARNASSENSIS, lib. i. p. 61.



During his time a great flood happened, which is described as partial ; but which, when taken in connexion with the whole story of Uranus, Cronus, and the Titans, very plainly shows that this also applies to the Flood of Noah, and the eight persons saved in the ark. This conclusion is indeed inevitable, when, with the premisses previously quoted we connect the account of the Atlantis, which M. Bailly has so accurately and eloquently given us, from Plato. In this is described the island Atlantis, as peopled by a race sprung from a single human pair, who were formed of earth. These were at first remarkable for piety, and, in consequence, being great favourites of the gods, enjoyed a golden age. But, in process of time, having degenerated as they increased in number, they at length became so wicked, that Jupiter, in a council of the gods, on account of their horrible depravity, determined to destroy the whole race by immersing the entire island in the ocean : while another tradition adds, that, at the time of this immersion, Noah made his escape from the island in an ark, and reached the present continent.\*

But by far the most curious and pertinent reference to the family of Noah which we have in Heathen mythology, is that which represents the three sons of Noah as a divine triad.†

The question whether the Heathen had any knowledge of a Trinity of persons in the Godhead, has been gravely and elaborately argued by eminent writers. Dr. Cudworth, and several other authors, contend that the doctrine of a Trinity of three Persons in the Divine Nature was not only believed and taught by Plato, but that it was, in fact, common to the ancient world ; being, as he maintains, “ a Hebrew, Chaldaic, Orphic, as well as a Pythagorean, dogma or Cabala.” ‡

\* BAILLY'S “History of Asia,” vol. ii. p. 31.

† FABER'S “Mysteries of the Cabiri,” vol. ii. p. 287. We have another instance of the Ogdoad in the Indian theology. Of the eight mystic forms of Siva, one is said to be the performance of a sacrifice. (FABER'S “Pagan Idolatry,” vol. i. p. 467.)

‡ “Intellectual System,” chap. iv. sect. 36.



It may appear presumptuous in us to pretend to decide a question on which such men as Cudworth have disagreed. Yet we are bound to say, that, after a careful perusal of the entire argument, we are convinced that no such knowledge of a Trinity, in any sense analogous to that of the Christian scriptures, was possessed either by Plato, or any other Heathen philosopher. On the contrary, we believe that if what has been called Platonism in our day had not consisted in a study of, and quotation from, Plotinus and Proclus, rather than Plato, those opinions would not have obtained. It is remarkable that if Dr. Cudworth and Gale, eminent as they most deservedly are, had not relied on these writers (the first of whom wrote in the third, and the latter in the fifth, century) for a correct exhibition of the sentiments of Plato, the notion that Heathen philosophers were acquainted with the doctrine of the Trinity would not have been so authoritatively propounded.

Nothing was more easy than for the leaders of the eclectic school of philosophy, with the Christian scriptures in their hands, to explain the language of Plato, and the sentiments advanced by the Heathen priesthood, in such a manner as to make it appear probable that they had some knowledge of the doctrine of a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead; especially when Christian teachers were found too eager to admit the claim, for the purpose of removing the air of novelty and mystery from an essential doctrine of the Gospel. Still it may be fairly supposed, that, even in order to this, there must have been some intimations of a triune character in ancient Pagan theology; and we may be not unreasonably asked to account for such allusions, and to explain them.

This we will endeavour to do. We admit, that, in most of the ancient Heathen mythologies, we find three grand divinities united in one government, or associated together as one combined deity. But we think this is to be attributed, not to any divinely-revealed knowledge of the true nature of the Divine *hypostasis*; we are rather of opinion that it had its origin in idolatry, and was spread with the practice of



idolatry to almost every part of the ancient world. It is a singular fact, that from the three sons of Noah the whole earth was peopled after the Flood ; and we consequently find that, when idolatry was introduced, and deceased heroes began to be invested with Divine honours, nothing was more natural than that the great father who had been preserved in the ark, and his three sons, should have been the objects of profane adoration. So it was. Proofs of this abound in ancient mythology. We may call attention to the theology of the ancient nations as corroborative of this truth.

A learned writer, who had studied this subject, said, that the earliest manifestations of these triune divisions were found in the oracles of Zoroaster.\* Here, though couched in a mystical kind of language, we have them distinctly recognised.

“The Monad is there first where the paternal Monad subsists.”

“The Monad is extended which generates two.”

“The mind of the Father said that all things should be cut into three.

“His will assented, and immediately all things were cut.

“The mind of the eternal Father said into three,

“Governing all things by mind.”

“The Father mingled every spirit from this Triad.”

“All things are governed in the bosoms of this Triad.”

“All things are governed and subsist in these three.”†

We are aware that the philosophical colouring found in the language of these oracles may militate against the opinion which has been given, that they refer to Noah and his three sons. Yet, when it is remembered that the god is in these same oracles called Dionysus or Bacchus, which we have already shown to be a deification of Noah, this scruple will be removed. Again we are told :—

“Typhon, Echidna, and Python, being the progeny of Tartarus and Earth, which is conjoined with Heaven, form as

\* MAURICE'S "Indian Antiquities," vol. iv. p. 253.

† "Chaldean Oracles of Zoroaster," CORY'S "Fragments," pp. 245, 246.



it were a certain Chaldaic Triad :” \* words which sufficiently indicate the mythologic structure of the entire scheme.

The theology of ancient Egypt also claims attention. Proclus assures us that the Orphic Triad of Uranus, Phanus, and Cronus, is substantially the same with the three kings of Plato. And, according to him, also, the other Platonists held a like opinion. Amelius, refining on the others, imagined a threefold demiurgus ; and the three intellects to be the three kings, which, he says, are the same as those mentioned by Orpheus and Plato. *Those persons of the Triad, however much obscured by fable and sophistry, relate to Noah and his family ;* and are really the demons of the ancients, called, as Bryant says, the Baalim of scripture. Even Hesiod, in his *Opera et Dies*, makes some allusion to these persons, and to the times in which they lived. “The demons lived in the days of Cronus ;” and that they were deified men, we have the same testimony : “When they died, they became demons, a sort of benevolent beings, who resided within the verge of the earth, and were called ‘guardians of mankind.’” Now, Cronus, as we have seen, is Noah ; and there can be no doubt that the meaning of this Orphic hymn alludes to Noah also, who is called Phanus and Protogonus. “I invoke *the first of men*, who was of a twofold state or nature, who wandered at large under the wide heavens, enclosed in an ovicular machine, who was also depicted with golden wings.”

Bryant, from Proclus himself, affords singular confirmation of all that has been advanced. The latter nearly approximated to the true history, which he had, no doubt, from some ancient source ; but, from ignorance of its purport, he turns it to ridicule. “As Cronus was no other than Zeus, we may find the history of the Triad further explained in the history of the latter ; and by the same author (Proclus). Time and all things among the ancients were deduced from Noah (or Cronus) ; hence they came at last, through their blind reverence, to think *him the real*

\* “Chaldean Oracles of Zoroaster,” CORY’S “Fragments,” p. 254.



*Creator*, and that he contrived every thing in his chaotic cavern. This is curious ; but how much more singular does it appear, when we find Proclus, the Coryphæus of Platonism, and the great expounder of the Trinity, aiding us so far as to declare that this very *Cronus was the founder of the Triad !* ‘ King Cronus is the founder of the fierce Triad.’\* Now Cronus being Noah, the three Cronii mentioned by Proclus are the three sons of the patriarch ; so that the Platonic Triad is founded on the ancient demoniacal worship of these three persons.”†

The mythology of India affords an exemplification of our views scarcely less striking.

The acknowledged divinities of India are, by respectable authorities, said to amount to thirty millions. But when we reconsider the matter, and allow first for the philosophical doctrines, historical events, and astronomical facts, from which the poets have compiled their mythology, representing as gods abstract qualities, kings, stars, planets, and inventing for them suitable trains of attendants ; and when, after this, we find the same divinity worshipped under many names, with slight changes of attribute, and acknowledged to have had many incarnations, all of which are separately adored ;—we shall cease to accuse the Hindoos of worshipping more gods than other Pagan nations.

Yet of all this multitude of deities there are *three* which demand especial notice. These are Bramah, Veeshnoo, and Seeva. And, what is of great importance to our argument, they are always represented as intimately associated, or united together. Hence in those ancient temples whose antiquity stretches into proximity with the patriarchal ages, they are represented as united in one person. That magnificent piece of sculpture, in the cavern of Elephanta, decidedly establishes the fact that, from the remotest eras, the Indian nations have worshipped a Triune Deity. The grand

\* PROCLUS, *Tim.* lib. v. cap. x. p. 265. See also BRYANT'S "Ancient Mythology," vol. iii. p. 108.

† MUSHET "On the Trinities of the Ancients," pp. 88—90, and also *note M.*



deity formed of one bust with three heads attests this important fact. On this point we do not enlarge, the fact of an Indian Trinity is too well known to require corroborative evidence. But it will be necessary for us to show that their character and origin support the view which we have taken. In the first place, we meet with a fact which, while it greatly derogates from the spiritual and philosophical character of these deities, at the same time prepares us for regarding these divinities, like others, as being merely deified men: it is this, that each of these had a consort. The wife of Bramah is called Saraswati; that of Vishnu is named Lacksmi; and the partner of Seeva is Parvati.\*

But, again: These three deities are believed to emanate from, or to be a triplication of, a yet older deity, whom they call *Brahm*. Yet this compound deity, as the whole of his history shows, is not the true God, but identically the same with the Orphic Jupiter, the Egyptian Osiris, the same as Bacchus Dionusus, and, in fact, as the great father in every part of the Pagan world. But in identifying this deity with Noah, and the Triad proceeding from him with his sons, we must observe that the Indian mythology begins anterior to the Deluge, and refers to the first father of the human family. The true key to their allusions appears to be this: Adam having had three sons, whose names are recorded, and after the Deluge Noah having also had three sons, whose descendants peopled the earth; the doctrine of the successive destruction and re-production of the world and of the human family was taught and believed. Hence Brahm is at the same time Adam and Noah, and in his triplicated form are the three sons of the former and of the latter. Brahm, then, at the head of this Triad is Menu. And the first Menu is evidently Adam. He is called Adima, and his wife Iva. This identity is further attested by the following circumstances: Menu has three daughters, who are married to three brothers sprung also from his body; one of these sons was eminently pious, and ano-

\* CHRISTMAS'S "Universal Mythology," p. 66.



ther very wicked ; and one of these lost his life at a sacrifice. But, agreeably to the doctrine we have mentioned, Brahm is also the second great father at the head of his Triad of sons. The first Menu, therefore, with his three sons, must be viewed as re-appearing in the characters of Menu-Satyavrata and his triple offspring, Sama, Cama, and Pra-Japati. But the ark-preserved Menu-Satyavrata and his three sons are certainly Noah and his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japhet.\*

We have precisely the same result presented to our view in the mythology of Greece and Rome. Saturn and his three sons, Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto, again exhibit the patriarch of the ark, and his three sons. We have already identified Saturn with Noah ; his sons are, with equal evidence, shown to be the sons of the arkite patriarch. " Saturn is said to have divided the empire of the world among his three sons, one of whom the Egyptians styled Hammon : and a story is related of this son, which seems evidently to have been borrowed from a well-known circumstance in the life of Noah : he is said to have intoxicated his aged father with honey-mead, and, while in that condition, to have bound and mutilated him. The real fact is not indeed told accurately ; but the resemblance of this legend to the Mosai-cal narrative, is such as to leave us no room to doubt of their common origination. It was in allusion, most probably, to the same event, that Saturn was thought to have enacted a law, that no one should be permitted with impunity to behold the gods naked. Bochart, in short, produces no less than fourteen points of resemblance between Noah and Saturn." †

We might pursue this investigation at greater length : it will, however, be sufficient to add, that we have the same triad presented to us in the Persian Oromasdes, Mithras, and Ahriman ; and again repeated in the mythology of the Scandinavians, with whom Bore was the great father, and the three sons Odin, Vile, and Ve.‡

\* FABER'S "Origin of Pagan Idolatry," vol. i. p. 119.

† FABER'S *Horæ Mosaicæ*, vol. i. p. 142. ‡ "Edda," fable iii.



Believing this point to be sufficiently illustrated, we propose to show that the Deluge was commemorated in the sacred names, buildings, and rites of the Heathen world.

There "was a temple sacred to Osiris at Theba; or, to say the truth, it was itself called Theba: and both the city, said to be one of the most ancient in Egypt, as well as the province, was undoubtedly denominated from it. Now Theba was the very name of the ark. When Noah was ordered to construct a vessel, in which he and his family were to be preserved, he was directed in express terms to build תבה *Theba*, an ark. It is the very word made use of by the sacred writer: so that we may, I think, be assured of the prototype, after which this temple was fashioned. It is said, indeed, to have been only two hundred and eighty cubits in length; whereas the ark of Noah was three hundred. But this is a variation of only one-fifteenth in the whole; and as the ancient cubit was not in all countries the same, we may suppose that this disparity arose rather from the manner of measuring, than from any real difference in the extent of the building. It was an idolatrous temple said to have been built by Sesostris in honour of Osiris,"\* or Noah.

"The same memorial is to be observed in other countries, where an ark, or ship, was introduced in their mysteries, and often carried about upon their festivals. Pausanias gives a remarkable account of a temple of Hercules at Eru-thra in Ionia; which he mentions as of the highest antiquity, and very like those in Egypt. The deity was represented upon a float, and was supposed to have come thither in this manner from Phenicia. Aristides mentions, that, at Smyrna, upon the feast called Dionusia, a ship used to be carried in procession. The same custom prevailed among the Athenians at the Panathenæa; when what was termed the sacred ship, was borne with great reverence through the city to the temple of Damater of Elusis. At Phalerus, near Athens, there were honours paid to an unknown hero, who was represented in the stern of a ship."†

\* BRYANT'S "Ancient Mythology," vol. iii. p. 36.

† *Ibid.* p. 37.



“In a series of pictures, representing ceremonies in honour of Bacchus, in the Antiquities of Herculaneum, appears what may be thought, with some probability, the nearest approach in form to the Noachical ark. A woman is carrying on her shoulder a square box, having a projecting roof, and in the end a door. This door is a distinguishing circumstance, for it plainly marks this receptacle as a house: it cannot be a mere box for ordinary uses, as the difficulty of putting things in, and taking them out, sufficiently demonstrates; neither is its angular roof, with its considerable projection, analogous to the purposes of a mere box; moreover, being carried in a commemorative procession, it is clearly a sacred *thebet*, or trunk, that is, that in which Dionysius was preserved. It has no pillars to characterize it as a votive temple; neither is the door-way proportioned to the entrance of a temple, as it rises nearly to the roof. To illustrate the nature of these sacred trunks, Mr. Taylor abstracts the following remarks: Oppian calls the ark of *fir-wood* that had contained the infant Bacchus, and which was carried in procession by the sacred choir, *arca ineffabilis*, ‘the most venerable ark:’ the word *chelos* is used by Homer in this signification; and both Suidas and Hesychius say *chelos* is *kibotus*; that is, ‘an ark.’ Pausanias says that Vulcan made a small statue of Bacchus, and gave it to Jupiter, who gave it to Dardanus the Trojan. In the sacking of Troy the portion of Eurypylus was an ark, (*λαρναξ*, *larnax*,) wherein was contained this statue. Eurypylus took it away; but, at his first attempt to look into this ark, to examine the statue, he was deprived of his senses, and became insane. Compare, 1 Sam. vi., the punishment that visited the men of Bethshemesh. Moreover, the ark was esteemed a symbol appropriate to Bacchus; and in his processions idols, or other mysteries referring to that deity, were enclosed in it. It was the same among the Egyptians. Observe further, that the Seventy in Genesis translate *thebah*, *kibotus*; in Exodus they retain the original *thebin*; whereas Epiphanius, Chrysostom, Theophilus of Antioch, and others, use the word *larnax*, the same as, among the Gentiles,



described the ark of Bacchus. The *cista mystica* of the Bacchic rites contained the most direct allusion to the great progenitor of mankind."\*

Although the Greeks "were apt to mention the same person under various titles, and, by these means, different people seem to be made principals in the same history; yet they were so far uniform in their accounts of this particular event, that they made each of them to be preserved in an ark. Thus it is said of Deucalion, Perseus, and Dionysius, that they were exposed upon the waters in a machine of this fabric. Adonis was hid in an ark by Venus; and was supposed to be in a state of death for a year."†

Evidence of the same character might be multiplied; but sufficient has been adduced to show, that memorials of the Deluge were wrought up with the entire structure of Heathen religion. We regard this as a most important circumstance. This religion, in all its active elements, was a flagrant denial of God's truth. Men, led away by the wiles of the devil, "changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man," and thus "worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever." Yet this remarkable compound of impiety and folly bears on its front indelible testimony to its own character. It was plausible to suggest the religious commemoration of those great events in the world's history, which the early pages of revelation record; it was still more deceptive and iniquitous to suggest the rendering of divine homage to those men whom God had miraculously honoured and preserved. Yet even when this was fully accomplished, and the world was filled with superstition and idolatry; the facts that had suggested its initial elements were fully and perpetually attested by their profane and unhallowed commemoration. It was in this way that those references to paradisiacal events, which we have already noticed, were called forth; it is thus that the fact of the Deluge is proved, even by those systems of error which obtained in the

\* TAYLOR'S Calmet, article *Ark*.

† BRYANT'S "Ancient Mythology," vol. iii. p. 43.



ancient world. The preceding pages show that the arkite patriarch was revered as the great demon-god of the Heathen world; that his three sons, in almost every Pagan nation, were adored as three deities standing in intimate relation to each other, and governing in a kind of family concord. And to such an extent was this practice carried, that the most minute circumstances, noticed in the sacred narrative, were referred to, and their memory perpetuated. The raven and the dove sent out of the ark by Noah, are often identified with the sacred names and sacred rites of the Heathen :\* and thus, even while changing the truth of God into a lie, men undesignedly reared an everlasting monument to the verity of revealed truth.

We have now only to supply a select portion of the historical and traditional evidence, which the different nations of the earth have furnished, in corroboration of the scriptural fact of an universal Deluge.

The Chaldean account, copied by Berosus from the archives of the temple of Belus at Babylon, is as follows :—  
 “After the death of Ardates, (the ninth sovereign,) his son Xisuthrus reigned eighteen *sari*. In his time happened a great deluge, the history of which is thus described : The deity Cronus appeared to him in a vision, and warned him that, upon the fifteenth day of the month Dæsius, there would be a flood, by which mankind would be destroyed. He therefore enjoined him to write a history of the beginning, procedure, and conclusion of all things, and to bury it in the city of the sun at Sippara ; and to build a vessel, and take with him into it his friends and relations, and to convey on board every thing necessary to sustain life, together with the different animals, both birds and quadrupeds, and trust himself fearlessly to the deep. Having asked the deity whither he was to sail, he was answered, ‘To the gods :’ upon which he offered up a prayer for the good of mankind.

\* One very curious instance of this, adopted in our own country, and remaining to our own day, may be noticed. From the name of the great father, the ark which was identified with a sanctuary was called *Naous* or *Navis* ; and, consequently, the term has been applied to the inner part of Christian churches, which is called the *nave*.



He then obeyed the Divine admonition, and built a vessel, five stadia in length, and two in breadth. Into this he put every thing which he had prepared ; and, last of all, conveyed into it his wife, his children, and his friends.

“ After the flood had been upon the earth, and was in time abated, Xisuthrus sent out birds from the vessel, which, not finding any food, nor any place whereupon they might rest their feet, returned to him again. After an interval of some days, he sent them forth a second time ; and they now returned with their feet tinged with mud. He made a trial a third time with these birds ; but they returned to him no more : from whence he judged that the surface of the earth had appeared above the waters. He therefore made an opening in the vessel, and, upon looking out, found that it was stranded upon the side of some mountain : upon which, he immediately quitted it, with his wife, his daughter, and the pilot. Xisuthrus then paid his adoration to the earth ; and, having constructed an altar, offered sacrifices to the gods ; and, with those who had come out of the vessel with him, disappeared.

“ They who remained within, finding that their companions did not return, quitted the vessel with many lamentations, and called continually on the name of Xisuthrus. Him they saw no more ; but they could distinguish his voice in the air, and could hear him admonish them to pay due regard to religion, and likewise inform them that it was upon account of his piety that he was translated to live with the gods ; that his wife and daughter, and the pilot, had obtained the same honour. To this he added, that they should return to Babylonia, and, as it was ordained, search for the writings at Sippara, which they were to make known to all mankind ; moreover, that the place wherein they then were was the land of Armenia. The rest, having heard these words, offered sacrifices to the gods ; and, taking a circuit, journeyed towards Babylonia.

“ The vessel being thus stranded in Armenia, some part of it yet remains in the Corcyræan mountains of Armenia : and the people scrape off the bitumen, with which it had



been outwardly coated, and make use of it by way of an alexipharmic and amulet. And when they returned to Babylon, and had found the writings at Sippara, they built cities, and erected temples: and Babylon was thus inhabited again.”\*

We call attention to this extract. The points of correspondence with the inspired narration are many and important. The particulars, also, which it adds are curious, although in some cases evidently fabulous. It was, without doubt, written by a people already addicted to demon-worship.

The Greek version of this catastrophe, as preserved by Lucian and others, is also worthy of notice.

“This generation, and the present race of men,” says he, “were not the first; for all those of that former generation perished. But these are of a second race, which increased, from a single person named Deucalion, to its present multitude. Concerning those men they relate the following tale: Being of a violent and ferocious temper, they were guilty of every sort of lawlessness. They neither regarded the obligation of oaths, nor the rights of hospitality, nor the prayers of the suppliant; wherefore a great calamity befell them. The earth suddenly poured forth a vast body of water, heavy torrents of rain descended, the rivers overflowed their banks, and the sea rose above its ordinary level, until the whole world was inundated, and all that were in it perished. In the midst of the general destruction, Deucalion alone was left to another generation, on account of his extraordinary wisdom and piety. Now, his preservation was thus effected: he caused his sons and their wives to enter into a large ark which he had provided, and afterwards went in himself. But, while he was embarking, swine, and horses, and lions, and serpents, and all other animals that live upon the face of the earth, came to him in pairs. These he took in with him: and they injured him not; but, on the contrary, *the greatest harmony subsisted between them through the influence of the Deity.* Thus

\* CORY'S “Fragments,” pp. 26—29.



they all sailed together in one ark, so long as the waters prevailed. Such is the narrative of the Greeks : but the Syrians of Hierapolis add to it a wonderful account of the whole Deluge being swallowed up by a vast chasm in their country. Deucalion, they say, when all these matters had taken place, erected altars, and built a temple to Juno over the chasm. I myself saw this chasm ; and, at that time, it was but a small aperture beneath the temple ; whether it was once larger, and afterwards decreased to its present size, I shall not pretend to say ; what I at least saw was but a small orifice. Of the truth, however, of this account, they adduce the following proof : Twice in each year water is brought from the sea to the temple ; and not only the priests, but all Syria and Arabia, nay, even many persons from beyond the Euphrates, take the trouble of going down to the sea, whence they all bring a certain quantity of water. This, as they convey it, they first pour out upon the floor of the temple. From the floor it finds its way to the chasm ; and the chasm, small as it now is, swallows up without difficulty a vast quantity of water. Respecting the ceremony they have an ancient tradition, that it was instituted by Deucalion himself, in memory at once of his calamity and his deliverance." \*

We wish to remark on two particulars alluded to in the preceding quotation. First, we have a curious, and, from a Heathen writer, an important, opinion, as to the manner and means by which the numerous tribes of animals were preserved in the ark. "How," ask our free-thinking professing Christians, "How could Noah select, arrange, and collect together, so many kinds of animals, some of them very fierce and very destructive ?" The Heathen solves the difficulty, and plainly and sensibly observes, that they "came to him in pairs," not only domestic animals, but even lions and serpents ; and that, during their lengthened stay in the ark, they did not injure either him or each other. Nor does our author state this very remarkable fact without reference

\* LUCIAN *De Deâ Syriâ*, quoted in FABER'S "Origin of Pagan Idolatry," vol. ii. p. 111.



to its cause. He tells us, that this miracle was effected "through the influence of the Deity." How should captious Christians, sceptical through the influence of misused scientific knowledge, blush at reading such a sentence!

Our second remark refers to the omission of all notice of the birds sent out of the ark by Noah, in this account of Lucian. But this defect is amply supplied by Plutarch, who, in reference to this same account, observes, that "it was maintained by mythologists, that Deucalion sent a dove out of the ark; which, when it returned to him, showed that the storm was not yet abated; but when he saw it no more, he concluded that the sky was become serene again."\*

As this account refers to Syria, as much as it does to Greece, we may here notice the striking evidence furnished on this subject by the Apamean medal.

This curious relic of antiquity is a coin which, it is maintained, was struck in the reign of Philip the Elder, at the city of Apamea in Phrygia. This city had formerly been called *Kibotus*, or "the ark." It should be observed, that most Asiatic coins relate to the religion and mythology of the places where they were struck. The remarkable part of this medal is its reverse; and to this we refer. Here is delineated a kind of square machine, floating upon the water. Through an opening in it are seen two persons, a man and a woman, as low as to the breast; and upon the woman is a veil. Over this ark is a kind of triangular pediment, on which there sits a bird, and below it another, which seems to flutter its wings, and holds in its mouth a small branch of a tree. Before the machine is a man following a woman, who by their attitude seem to have just quitted it, and to have got upon dry land. Upon the ark itself, underneath the persons there enclosed, is to be read, in distinct characters, ΝΩΕ. The learned editor of this account says that it had fallen to his lot to meet with three of these coins. They were of brass, and of the medaglion size.†

\* PLUTARCH *De Solert. Animal.* quoted in FABER'S "Origin of Pagan Idolatry," vol. ii. p. 111.

† BRYANT'S "Ancient Mythology," vol. iii. p. 47.



As might have been expected, laboured efforts have been made to neutralize the testimony of this important witness ; and much ingenuity has been employed to throw doubt on the inscription on the ark, ΝΩΕ ; but, in our judgment, without success. The best writers on biblical antiquities, including Faber, Horne, and Taylor in his edition of Calmet, concur in this opinion. These objections have called forth an ample " Vindication of the Apamean Medal," from the powerful pen of the learned Bryant, the force of which has never yet been repelled. In it, alluding to the disputed letters, he observes, supposing the point to be conceded, " What would it all amount to ? The history still would remain in legible characters, independent of the inscription. Thus, take away the letters ΝΩΕ, or assign them to a different purpose (than the name of Noah), yet the historical part of the coin can neither be obliterated nor changed. The ark upon the waters, and the persons in the ark, will still remain ; the dove,\* too, and the olive will be seen ; and the great event to which they allude, will be too manifest to be mistaken. The whole region to which these coins are to be ascribed, was replete with memorials of this kind. Here were the mountains of Celænæ, upon which the ark was supposed to have rested, and the temples of Μην Αρχαεος, *Deus Lunus arkæus*." †

Hindu traditions relating to this event, although less exact in their accordance with holy scripture, and more

\* " There is every reason to conclude that, from the service which the dove rendered Noah on this occasion, it was afterward regarded as a messenger of good tidings, or as appointed to communicate gracious communications from God. Numerous instances of this might be adduced : we refer only to the following from the scriptures. The ancient and true name of the dove was, as I have shown, Ionah and Ionas. And we find that the prophet who was sent on a gracious embassy to Nineveh is styled Ionas, or ' the dove.' When the immediate precursor of the Saviour was born, his father took the writing-table and wrote his name John, or ' the dove,' and the people marvelled. And, again, when Peter made his noble declaration of the divinity and Messiahship of the Saviour, he was immediately called Simon Bar-Iona, or ' the son of the dove.' " (BRYANT'S " Ancient Mythology," vol. iii. p. 128.)

† BRYANT'S " Ancient Mythology," vol. v. p. 310.



highly adorned with the fictions of mythologic fable, are nevertheless interesting and important.

“Desiring the preservation of herds and of Brahmans, of genii and virtuous men, of the Vedas, of law, and of precious things, the Lord of the universe assumes many bodily shapes; but though he pervades, like the air, a variety of beings, yet he is himself unvaried, since he has no quality subject to change. At the close of the last *calpa*, there was a general destruction occasioned by the sleep of Brahma; whence his creatures in different worlds were drowned in a vast ocean. Brahma, being inclined to slumber, desiring repose after the lapse of ages, the strong demon Hayagri’va came near him, and stole the Vedas which had flowed from his lips. When Heri, the preserver of the universe, discovered this deed of the prince of Dánavas, he took the shape of a minute fish, called *sap’hari*. A holy king, named Satyavrata, then reigned; a servant of the spirit which moved on the waves, and so devout, that water was his only sustenance. He was the child of the sun, and in the present *calpa* is invested by Nara’yan in the office of Menu, by the name of *Srâddhadevéi*, or ‘the god of obsequies.’ One day, as he was making a libation in the river Crítamálà, and held water in the palm of his hand, he perceived a small fish moving in it. The king of Dravira immediately dropped the fish into the river, together with the water which he had taken from it; when the *sap’hari* thus pathetically addressed the benevolent monarch: ‘How canst thou, O king, who showest affection to the oppressed, leave me in this river-water, where I am too weak to resist the monsters of the stream who fill me with dread?’ He, not knowing who had assumed the form of a fish, applied his mind to the preservation of the *sap’hari*, both from good nature, and from regard to his own soul; and, having heard its very suppliant address, he kindly placed it under his protection in a small vase full with water; but in a single night its bulk was so increased, that it could not be contained in the jar, and thus again addressed the illustrious prince: ‘I am not pleased with living miserably in this little



vase : make me a large mansion, where I may dwell in comfort.' The king, removing it thence, placed it in the water of a cistern ; but it grew three cubits in less than fifty minutes, and said : ' O king, it pleases me not to stay vainly in this narrow cistern : since thou hast granted me an asylum, give me a spacious habitation.' He then removed it, and placed it in a pool, where, having ample space around its body, it became a fish of considerable size. ' This abode, O king, is not convenient for me, who must swim at large in the waters : exert thyself for my safety, and remove me to a deep lake.' Thus addressed, the pious monarch threw the suppliant into a lake, and, when it grew of equal bulk with that piece of water, he cast the vast fish into the sea. When the fish was cast into the waves, he thus again spoke to Satyavrata : ' Here the horned sharks, and other monsters of great strength, will devour me. Thou shouldest not, O valiant man, leave me in this ocean.'

" Thus repeatedly deluded by the fish, who had addressed him in gentle words, the king said, ' Who art thou, that beguilest me in that assumed shape ? Never before have I seen or heard of so prodigious an inhabitant of the waters, who, like thee, has filled up, in a single day, a lake an hundred leagues in circumference. Surely, thou art Bhagavat, who appearest before me ; the great Heri, whose dwelling was on the waves ; and who now, in compassion to thy servants, bearest the form of the natives of the deep. Salutation and praise to thee, O first male, the Lord of creation, of preservation, of destruction ! Thou art the highest object, O supreme Ruler, of us thy adorers, who piously seek thee. All thy delusive descents in this world give existence to various beings : yet I am anxious to know, for what cause that shape has been assumed by thee. Let me not, O lotus-eyed, approach in vain the feet of a deity, whose perfect benevolence has been extended to all ; when thou hast shown us, to our amazement, the appearance of other bodies, not in reality existing, but successively exhibited.' The Lord of the universe, loving the pious man who thus implored him, and intending to preserve him from



the sea of destruction, caused by the depravity of the age, thus told him how he was to act : ‘ In seven days from the present time, O thou tamer of enemies, the three worlds will be plunged in an ocean of death ; but, in the midst of the destroying waves, a large vessel sent by me for thy use shall stand before thee. Then shalt thou take all medicinal herbs, all the variety of seeds ; and, accompanied by seven saints, encircled by pairs of all brute animals, thou shalt enter the spacious ark, and continue in it secure from the flood on one immense ocean without light, except the radiance of thy holy companions. When the ship shall be agitated by an impetuous wind, thou shalt fasten it with a large sea-serpent on my horn ; for I will be near thee, drawing the vessel with thee, and thy attendants ; I will remain on the ocean, O chief of men, until a night of Bramá shall be completely ended. Thou shalt then know my true greatness, rightly named the supreme Godhead ; by my favour, all thy questions shall be answered, and thy mind abundantly instructed.’

“ Heri, having thus directed the monarch, disappeared ; and Satyavrata humbly waited for the time which the ruler of our senses had appointed. The pious king, having scattered toward the east the pointed blades of the grass *darbha*, and turning his face toward the north, sat meditating on the feet of the God who had borne the form of a fish. The sea overwhelmed its shores, deluged the whole earth, and was soon perceived to be augmented by showers from immense clouds. He, still meditating on the command of Bhagavat, saw the vessel advancing, and entered it with the chiefs of the Bráhmins, having carried into it the medicinal creepers, and conformed to the directions of Heri. The saints thus addressed him : ‘ O king, meditate on Ce’sava ; who will surely deliver us from this danger, and grant us prosperity.’ The god, being invoked by the monarch, appeared again distinctly on the vast ocean in the form of a fish, blazing like gold, extending a million of leagues, with one stupenduous horn ; on which the king, as had before been commanded by Heri, tied the ship with a



cable made of a vast serpent, and, happy in his preservation, stood praising the destroyer of Madhu. When the monarch had finished his hymn, the primeval male, Bhagavat, who watched for his safety on the great expanse of water, spoke aloud to his own divine essence, pronouncing a sacred *purána*, which contained the rules of the *Sanc'hya* philosophy : but it was an infinite mystery to be concealed within the breast of Satyavrata ; who, sitting in the vessel with the saints, heard the principle of the soul, the Eternal Being, proclaimed by the preserving power. Then Heri, rising together with Brahmá, from the destructive deluge, which was abated, slew the demon Hayagri'va, and recovered the sacred books. Satyavrata, instructed in all divine and human knowledge, was appointed in the present *calpa*, by the favour of Vishnu, the seventh Menu, surnamed Vaivaswata : but the appearance of a horned fish to the religious monarch was *máyá*, or 'delusion ;' and he who shall devoutly hear this important allegorical narrative, will be delivered from the bondage of sin."\*

This interesting extract was literally translated by Sir William Jones from the Bhágavat ; and is the subject of the first Purána. This distinguished writer regarded it as an epitome of the first Indian history that is now extant ; and observes respecting it, that it "appears to me very curious and very important ; for the story, though whimsically dressed up in the form of an allegory, seems to prove a primeval tradition in this country of the *universal Deluge* described by Moses."†

It is not necessary that we should point out the substantial agreement of this legend with the Mosaic narrative ; but it should be observed that the fiction of the ornamental parts of the tale is distinctly avowed. It may also be noticed as a singular coincidence, that while Moses states that Noah was shut into the ark *seven days* before the flood begun, so this Indian account makes *seven days* to elapse from the time when the Deity addressed the pious king until the deluge took place.

\* "Asiatic Researches," vol. i. pp. 230—234.

† *Ibid.* p. 234.



The second Hindu *Avatar*, although not so exclusively referring to the Deluge, (some traditions of Creation being also included,) may nevertheless further exhibit the nature of oriental records on this subject.

The whole earth "was covered with water. Brahma again resumed his posture of contemplation and penance, to obtain the means of raising up the earth; and poured forth the following prayer to the throne of the Almighty in profound humility of soul: 'O Bhagavat, since thou broughtest me from nonentity into existence for a particular purpose, accomplish by thy benevolence that purpose!' In this situation, by the power of God, there issued, from the essence of Brahma, a being shaped like a boar, white and exceeding small; this being, in the space of an hour, grew to the size of an elephant of the largest magnitude, and remained in the air. Brahma was astonished on beholding this figure, and discovered, by the force of internal penetration, that it could be nothing but the power of the Omnipotent, which had assumed a body and become visible. He now felt that God is all, and that all is from him, and all in him; and said to Mareechee and his sons, (the attendant genii,) 'A wonderful animal has emanated from my essence; at first of the smallest size, it has in one hour increased to this enormous bulk, and without doubt it is a portion of the almighty power.' They were engaged in this conversation when that *vara*, or 'boar-form,' suddenly uttered a sound like the loudest thunder, and the echo reverberated, and shook all the quarters of the universe; but still, under this dreadful awe of heaven, a certain wonderful divine confidence secretly animated the hearts of Brahma, Mareechee, and the other genii, who immediately began praises and thanksgivings. That *vara* figure hearing the power of the Vedas and Mantras from their mouths, again made a loud noise, and became a dreadful spectacle. Shaking the full flowing mane which hung down his neck on both sides, and erecting the humid hairs of his body, he proudly displayed his two most exceedingly white tusks; then, rolling around his wine-coloured eyes, and erecting his tail, he descended from the



region of the air, and plunged head-foremost in the water. The whole body of water was convulsed by the motion, and began to rise in waves, while the guardian spirit of the sea, being terrified, began to tremble for his domain, and cry for quarter and mercy. At this the devotees and *reyshees* again commenced their praises in honour of Bhagavat, who, by one glance of his eye, illumined the whole world of water. As the power of the Omnipotent had assumed the body of *vara*, on that account he condescended to use the particular instinct of that animal, and began to smell about, that he might discover where the earth was submerged. At length, having divided the water, and arriving at the bottom, he saw the earth lying, a mighty and barren stratum : then he took up the ponderous globe, (freed from the water,) and raised it high on the tip of his tusk. In a moment, with one leap, coming to the surface by the all-directing power of the Omnipotent Creator, he spread it like a carpet, on the face of the water, and then vanished from the sight of Brahma.”\*

Here, too, we have much of allegorical figure ; and, what is worthy of notice, the paintings illustrative of those events which still remain on the walls of some of the ancient pagodas, come rather nearer the truth. Vishnu is there portrayed as a man, having four-arms and the head of a boar. His hands hold a sword, a sea-shell, the sacred book of the antediluvian writings, and the mystic ring. His feet trample on the gigantic demon-prince, Hirinacheren, who floats extended many a rood in the midst of the waters. His tusks support the crescent or lunar boat ; and within the crescent thus supported is the globe of the earth, upon which are characteristically displayed buildings, mountains, and trees.†

Without referring to the particulars mentioned in these extracts, it will be at once seen that they directly point to

\* Translated by Mr. Halhed from the Puranas, and quoted in MAURICE'S "Ancient History of Hindostan," vol. i. pp. 304—306.

† FABER'S "Origin of Pagan Idolatry," vol. ii. p. 123 ; and the plate in MAURICE'S "Ancient History of Hindostan," vol. i. p. 477.



the fact of the Flood, and corroborate the Mosaic narrative in all its essential parts.

The ancient history of China does not exhibit equally distinct attestation of this great fact; yet the notices that are found deserve attention.

Having referred to the pristine felicity of mankind when in a state of innocence, and to the introduction of sin, they go on to speak of its fearful consequences.

“The pillars of heaven were broken. The earth shook to its very foundations. The heavens sunk lower toward the north. The sun, the moon, and the stars changed their motions. The earth fell to pieces, and the waters enclosed within its bosom burst forth with violence, and overflowed it. Man having rebelled against Heaven, the system of the universe was totally disordered. The sun was eclipsed, the planets altered their course, and the grand harmony of nature was disturbed.”

We will not add to this brief quotation others which appear to relate to the same subject, or give any comment of our own on the application of this passage; but simply quote the opinion of Sir William Jones: “The god Budha, say the Indians, married Ila, whose father was preserved in a miraculous ark from an universal deluge. Now, although I cannot insist with confidence that the rainbow in the Chinese fable alludes to the Mosaic narrative of the Flood, nor build any solid argument on the divine person Niu-va, of whose character, and even of whose sex, the historian of China speaks very doubtfully, I may nevertheless assure you, after full inquiry and consideration, that the Chinese, like the Hindus, believe the earth to have been wholly covered with water, which, in works of undisputed authenticity, they describe as flowing abundantly, then subsiding, and separating the higher from the lower age of mankind; that the division of time from which their poetical history begins, just preceded the appearance of Fo-hi on the mountains of Chin.” \*

\* SIR WILLIAM JONES'S “Discourse on the Chinese,” in the “Asiatic Researches,” vol. ii. p. 376.



The opinions which prevailed on this subject in ancient Persia, as they are given in the Zendavesta, shall now be cited.

Ahriman the evil one, having corrupted the world, "it was thought necessary to bring over the face of the earth an universal flood of waters, that all impurity might be washed away; and as the second man-bull Taschter was the person appointed to effect this great work, he forthwith set about it. Taschter was seconded by Bahman, by Hom-Ized, and by Beni-Barzo-Ized. The pure souls watched with care over his safety. On this occasion, he had, as it were, three bodies,—the body of a man, the body of a horse, and the body of a bull. His light shone on high during thirty days and thirty nights, and he caused rain to descend under each body for the space of ten days. Every drop of that rain was like a large salver. The earth was wholly covered with water to the height of a man; and, the streams penetrating to its very inmost recesses, all the kharfesters perished in the mighty inundation; so prodigious was the quantity of rain: and it fell in drops, each of which equalled in bulk the head of an ox.

"At length the waters began to retire, and were again confined within their proper bounds; for a violent wind during three days agitated them on all sides upon the earth. Meanwhile, God the Creator drove back all the waters from the Arg-Roud. Then he caused Mount Albordi to appear, and afterwards the other mountains. All these mountains multiplied themselves from the root of Albordi, as suckers are propagated from a tree; and at last the surface of the whole earth became visible. The particular region in which Albordi was situated, bore the name of *Ferakh-kand*, and there Ormuzd planted the germs of all the kharfesters who remained, and from whom all things were destined to spring. Here another bull was framed, which was the author of all abundance. We are likewise told, that two animals of this species were produced, a male and a female; and from them the universe was derived. The mode of their production is not a little remarkable. The seed of the



first-mentioned bull was purified in the moon, it was then formed into a living body, and out of that body sprung a bull and a cow. From them all kinds of animals and birds and fishes originated." \*

Egypt furnishes an equally decisive testimony. Having already alluded to the identity of the principal divinities of this country with Noah and his sons, we will not refer on this head immediately to Egyptian mythology, but satisfy ourselves with the testimony of Plato, who states that, having questioned an Egyptian priest on the subject, he was informed that "the gods, now wishing to purify the earth by water, overwhelmed it with a deluge. On this occasion, certain herdsmen and shepherds were saved on the tops of the mountains: but they who dwelt in the towns which are situated in our country, were swept away into the sea by the rising of the rivers." †

The tradition of the Deluge preserved among the ancient Scandinavians, is equally pointed, and as briefly narrated. "The sons of Bore slew the giant Ymir, and there ran so much blood from his wounds, that all the families of the giants of the frost were drowned in it, except one single giant, who saved himself, with all his household. He is called Bergelmer. He escaped by happening to be on board his bark; and by him was preserved the race of the giants of the frost. This is confirmed by the following verses: 'Many winters before the earth was fashioned, was Bergelmer born; and well I know that this sage giant was saved and preserved on board his bark.' " ‡

We now add other testimonies from early Jewish and Christian authorities, corroborating some of the most important circumstances concerning the Deluge mentioned in the scripture narrative.

Josephus says, "Now, all the writers of barbarian histories make mention of this Flood, and of this ark; among

\* FABER'S "Pagan Idolatry," vol. ii. p. 61.

† PLATONIS *Timæus*, fol. 22, quoted in FABER'S *Horæ Mosaicæ*, vol. i. p. 112.

‡ "Edda," fable iv.



whom is Berosus the Chaldean ; for, when he is describing the circumstances of the Flood, he goes on thus : ‘ It is said that there is still some part of the ship in Armenia, at the mountain of the Cordyæans ; and that some persons carry off pieces of the bitumen, which they take away, and use chiefly for amulets for the averting of mischiefs.’ Hieronymus the Egyptian, also, who wrote the Phenician Antiquities, and Mnaseas, and a great many more, make mention of the same. Nay, Nicolaus of Damascus, in his ninety-sixth book, hath a particular relation about them, where he speaks thus : ‘ There is a great mountain in Armenia, over Minyas, called Baris, upon which, it is reported, that many who fled at the time of the Deluge were saved ; and that one who was carried in an ark came on shore upon the top of it, and that the remains of the timber were a great while preserved. This might be the man about whom Moses, the legislator of the Jews, wrote.’ ” \*

Abydenus also relates of Xisuthrus, that, “ upon the third day after the cessation of the rain, Xisuthrus sent out birds, by way of experiment, that he might judge whether the flood had subsided. But the birds, passing an unbounded sea without finding any place of rest, returned again to Xisuthrus. This he repeated with other birds. And when, upon the third trial, he succeeded, (for the birds then returned with their feet stained with mud,) the gods translated him from among men. With respect to the vessel, which yet remains in Armenia, it is the custom of the inhabitants to form bracelets and amulets of its wood.” †

“ In a similar manner we are told by Melo, that the person who was saved, along with his sons, from the waters of the Deluge, was afterwards driven away by the natives from Armenia ; upon which he retired into the mountains of Syria.” ‡

“ Epiphanius also relates, that, in the high land of Armenia, called the Gordyëan Hills, one mountain in particular,

\* JOSEPHUS’S “ Antiquities,” lib. i. cap. iii. sect. 6.

† CORY’S “ Fragments,” p. 34.

‡ FABER’S *Horæ Mosaicæ*, vol. i. p. 119.



loftier than the rest, bore in his days the name of Lubar ; which, in the language of the country, signified 'the descending place.' Thus Theophilus asserts, that fragments of the ark were still to be seen on the mountains of Aram, or Armenia. And Chrysostom appeals to the circumstance, as a thing well known and generally allowed : 'Do not,' says he, 'those mountains of Armenia bear witness to the truth, those mountains where the ark first rested ? and are not the remains of it preserved there even until this day ?' It is not improbable that such relics might then be shown ; though, like the multiplied fragments of the true cross, they might be able to prefer no very strong claims to authenticity. The circumstance, however, of their being shown, proves at least the existence of a prevailing belief, that the ark grounded in that region."\*

We have little acquaintance with the history and traditions of Africa ; yet, amid all its want of literature, and our limited knowledge of what it does possess, it is singular that we can cite one corroborative evidence even from that continent.

"Among the Magazines of Darbia, three miles south-west of Darfour, the history of a Deluge is mentioned in their traditions, in which all human beings perished ; but they add, that the Deity was therefore obliged to create mankind anew."†

There is another class of evidence which demands deep attention, and which will be regarded with particular interest. America was so long cut off from all connexion with the Old World, that it is not possible for its ancient traditions to have obtained character or colouring from the events or opinions which prevailed in Europe or Asia, during the early or middle ages. It must therefore be regarded as a curious problem, whether the aboriginal tribes of this continent possessed any traditions of an universal Deluge. And it is a singular fact, that such traditions not only exist, but are remarkable for their frequency and point. We select a few cases in proof.

\* FABER'S *Horæ Mosaicæ*, vol. i. p. 120.

† SHARON TURNER'S "Sacred History," vol. ii. p. 327.



“ At the time of the conquest of South America, the inhabitants of Mechsacan, of Thlascala, and the people called Achagna, yet preserved the tradition of an universal Deluge, in punishment of the crimes of men. The first of these held, that a priest called Tezpi was saved from it, by retiring with his wife and children into a great box of wood, in which he had also gathered together a great many animals and excellent seeds of all sorts ; and that, after the retreat of the waters, he let fly a bird, called aura, which came not back ; and successively several others, which also came not back ; but that the least of these birds, and that which these Indians esteemed the most, soon appeared again, with a branch of a tree in its mouth. (*Histoire Générale des Voyages.*) A native of Cuba said to Gabriel of Cabzera, ‘ Why dost thou abuse, since we are brothers ? Dost not thou descend from one of the sons of him who built the great box to save himself from the waters, and are not we descended from the other ? ’ (*Vide HERRERA.*) ” \*

Again : “ The Peruvians, as we are informed by Gomera, believed, in a similar manner, that it once rained so violently as to inundate all the lower parts of the country. In consequence of this, an universal destruction of the human species took place, a few persons only excepted, who escaped into caves situated on the tops of the mountains. To these elevated retirements they had previously conveyed a sufficient stock of provisions, and a number of living animals ; lest, when the waters abated, the whole race should become extinct. As soon as the rain ceased, they sent out two dogs, which returned to them besmeared with mud and slime. Hence they concluded that the flood had not yet subsided. After a certain interval, they sent out more dogs, which coming back dry, convinced them that the earth was now habitable : upon which they left the places to which they had retired, and became the progenitors of the present race of men. The number of persons, whom they supposed to have been thus saved, is seven. But this is the precise number of the

\* HOWARD “ On the Earth and Mankind,” p. 121.



Noetic family, exclusive of its head: whence that number became so famous in the diluvian mythology of the ancients. The Peruvian seven are doubtless the same as the seven Cabiri, the seven Titans, the seven Hindu Rishis, and the seven arkite companions of the British Arthur.

“In this account no mention is made of the ark; but, if we may believe Herrera, the deficiency was supplied by the more accurate tradition of the mountaineers of Peru. They affirmed that all perished in the Deluge, except six persons, who were saved in a float. From them descended the inhabitants of that country.”\*

The ancient inhabitants of Chili also make the Flood a part of their historical remembrances: they have a tradition “of a great Deluge, in which only a few persons were saved, who took refuge upon a high mountain called Thegtheg, or ‘the thundering,’ which had three points, and the property of moving upon the water. (MOLINI’S Chili, vol. ii. p. 82.) A more recent authority also mentions of this country, ‘The Araucanian Indians have preserved the tradition of an universal Deluge, which drowned the human race.’ (*Bull. Univ.* 1830, p. 510.)”†

But, according to Herrera, the tradition preserved by the inhabitants of Cuba was yet more definite and particular. He informs us, that they were not ignorant of the creation of the universe, and that they possessed much information concerning the Flood. The world, they said, had been destroyed by water, through the agency of three persons who came three several ways. At this time, an old man, foreseeing the Deluge, built a great ship, and went into it with his family, and abundance of animals. After he had been shut up many days, he sent out a crow, which did not return, but stayed to feed on the dead bodies: at length, however, it came back with a green branch in its mouth. They related, moreover, that this ancient man lay uncovered in consequence of intoxication, and that one of his sons scoffed at him while in that state, but that the others spread their gar-

\* FABER’S “Pagan Idolatry,” vol. ii. p. 142.

† SHARON TURNER’S “Sacred History,” vol. ii. p. 328.



ments over him. They added, that they themselves were descended from the former son; whence they had no raiment to cover their nakedness: and they argued, that the Spaniards must have sprung from a different son, from one of those that spread their garments over their father; because they had both clothes and horses.\*

In Brazil similar traditional notices of the Deluge were preserved. "At the period of the great catastrophe, they supposed all mankind to have perished, save a man and his sister, who escaped on a *janepata*, or raft. From this pair the Brazilians deduce their origin.

"Lelius relates, that he was present at one of their assemblies, when, in a solemn chorus, they chanted a kind of requiem to the souls of their ancestors. In the course of the song, they did not fail to notice the catastrophe of the Deluge; in which the whole world perished, except some of their progenitors, who escaped by climbing into high trees."†

Even the inhabitants of Otaheite, secluded as they long were from the rest of the world, preserved no indistinct remembrance of the Deluge, of the patriarch Noah, and of his three sons. "They have a tradition, we are assured, that once in their anger the great gods broke the whole world into pieces, and that all the islands around them are but little parts of what once was the great land of which their own island is the eminent part. They speak, likewise, of a man born of the sand of the sea, who married his own daughter. The daughter bore him three sons and three daughters; the father and mother dying, the brothers said, 'Let us take our sisters to wife, and become many.' So men began to multiply upon the earth."‡

"And, what is most curious, we learn from Peter Martyr, that, when the Spaniards first discovered Nicaragua, they attempted to persuade the prince of the country to embrace Christianity. Upon this he immediately inquired,

\* FABER'S "Pagan Idolatry," vol. ii. p. 145.

† FABER'S *Horæ Mosaicæ*, vol. i. p. 116.

‡ FABER'S "Pagan Idolatry," vol. ii. p. 146.



whether those who professed the religion of Jesus had any knowledge of the Flood; which, according to traditional accounts received from his predecessors, had once covered the whole earth, and destroyed both men and beasts.”\*

We will only add to the foregoing historical notices and traditions, those which have been preserved by the ancient Britons.

These have been ably summed up by the learned Mr. Davies, in the following language:—“The profligacy of mankind had provoked the great Supreme to send a pestilential wind upon the earth. A pure poison descended; every blast was death. At this time the patriarch, distinguished for his integrity, was shut up, together with his select company, in the enclosure with the strong door. Here the just ones were safe from injury. Presently a tempest of fire arose. It split the earth asunder, to the great deep. The lake Llion burst its bounds: and the waves of the sea lifted themselves on high, round the borders of Britain; the rain poured down from heaven, and the water covered the earth. But that water was intended as a lustration, to purify the polluted globe, to render it meet for the renewal of life, and to wash away the contagion of its former inhabitants into the chasms of the abyss. The flood which swept from the surface of the earth the expiring remains of the patriarch’s contemporaries, raised his vessel, or enclosure, on high, from the ground, bore it safe upon the summit of the waves, and proved to him and his associates the water of life and renovation.”†

We cannot detail all the authorities upon which this judgment is founded; but we add the following direct evidence from the Triads.

“XIII. There were three awful events in the isle of Britain. The first was the bursting of the lake of floods, and the rushing of an inundation over all the lands, until all persons were destroyed, except Dwyvan and Dwyvach,

\* FABER’S “Pagan Idolatry,” vol. ii. p. 144.

† “Mythology of the British Druids,” p. 226.



who escaped in an open vessel ; and from them the isle of Britain was re-peopled.

“XCVII. The three primary and extraordinary works of the isle of Britain. The ship of Nwydd Nav Neivion, which brought in it a male and female of all living things when the lake of floods burst forth.”

In another respect the mythology of the Britons presents an aspect similar to that which we have seen exemplified in eastern Europe and Asia : their hero-deity is identified with the patriarch of the ark. Mr. Bryant has given the following, as the general features of the character of the great father, by whatever name he may be celebrated in different countries :—“The patriarch, under whatever title he may come, is generally represented as the father of gods and men ; the outlines of his history are so strongly marked, that we cannot mistake to whom the mythology relates. He lived in the time of the Flood : he first built an altar ; he first collected men together, and formed them into communities ; he first gave laws, and distributed justice ; he divided mankind by their families and nations, over the face of the earth.” \*

In reference to this outline, Mr. Davies adduces, on the authority of the Triads, the following particulars respecting Hu-Gadarn, the hero-deity of the Britons :—

“ 1. He lived in the time of the Flood.

“ 2. With his oxen, he performed some achievement, which prevented the repetition of that calamity.” (Triad xcvi.)

“ 3. He first collected together or caused the primitive race ; and,

“ 4. Formed them into communities and families.” (Triad lvii.)

“ 5. He first gave traditional laws, for the regulation and government of society.” (Triad xcii.)

“ 6. He was eminently distinguished for his regard to justice, equity, and peace.” (Triad v.)

\* “Ancient Mythology,” vol. ii. p. 226.



“7. He conducted the several families of the first race to their respective settlements in the various regions.” (Triad iv.)

“8. But he had instructed this race in the art of husbandry previous to their removal and separation.” (Triad xxxvi.) \*

We might add to these testimonies others equally pertinent, referring to nations in every part of the world ; but further quotation is unnecessary. We believe that the selection of evidence which has been adduced will be deemed sufficient to establish the important fact of the Deluge. Humboldt, whose unwearied travelling made him eminently qualified to give a valuable opinion on this point, observes, “The substance of the traditions respecting the destroyed races, and the renovation of nature, is every where almost the same, although each nation gives it a local colouring ;” and he adds, “The traditions respecting the primitive state of the globe among all nations present a resemblance that fills us with astonishment. So many different languages belonging to branches which appear to have no connexion with each other, transmit the same fact to us.”

It may be expected that we should advert to the geological effects produced by the Flood, and notice the objections which professors of this science have adduced to the scripture narrative. We should not decline an extended investigation of these particulars, if it would be likely to remove any doubts, or to cast any new and important light upon it. But we have no hope of this. A few brief remarks will show on what ground our opinion rests ; and supply all that we deem necessary on this part of the subject.

We do not disparage the results of geological research. But we doubt the claims of this science to dictate articles of faith with respect to the origin of the earth, and its condition in the early ages of its existence.

We are in a position to inquire, How far are geologists

\* “Mythology of the British Druids,” p. 107.



agreed? We do not refer to mere pretenders, but to authors of established credit: how far do these agree? We think, thus far: It is admitted that the various rocks and strata which compose the surface of the earth have been produced or deposited in succession, one after the other, the upper upon the lower, at some intervals of time, greater or less. It is also generally admitted that at some periods after these depositions and formations, such of them as exhibit veins of granite, trap, or other matter, have been pierced and entered by these intruding substances. It is further agreed that when these rocks or beds have been raised up into hills or mountains, these elevations have been made after the masses had been deposited in the formation of the surface. We believe, every geologist assents to these propositions, as undoubted facts. But then, in applying these facts to the scriptural doctrine, we find that the sacred record gives us no details answerable thereto; and, consequently, it neither agrees with nor contradicts these geological principles. But then the question presents itself, At what time did these several depositions take place? We have already (however unscientific it may be regarded) protested against the possibility of this question being decided by induction. The Deluge, like the Creation, was an extraordinary act of the Almighty Power. But, to lay aside this objection, what do geologists say as to the time requisite for these depositions? The fact is, they are not agreed; and the disagreement of such eminent men proves our position,—that the data are not sufficient to warrant an induction. But it is constantly alleged that estimates of these times have been made, and that these invalidate the Mosaic account. To some extent this is correct; and that the reader may form his own opinion of these “oppositions of *science*, falsely so called,” we will quote the opinions of two eminent authors on this subject.

The first, a leading French geologist, divides the existence of the earth, prior to the first appearance of human beings, into four periods. We quote from Boubée's *Géologie Populaire*, p. 7. Paris, 1833.

His four *époques* are,—



“1. The primitive state of the *incandescence du globe*, when the atmosphere was all on fire, from which it gradually cooled.” (Pages 27—29.)

“2. The first appearance of organized beings, plants, and aquatic animals, and the formation of the coal-beds, and the extinction and successive creation of these organized beings.” (Pages 31—36.)

“3. The appearance of land animals ; increasing progression of the organic kingdom, and decrease of the inorganic.” (Pages 39—41.)

“4. The universal Deluge ;” after which he places the first appearance of human beings. (Pages 42—63.)

M. Boubée accompanies his book with a *tableau* of these different ages. In this he specifies that the first epoch lasted sixty thousand years ; the second, two hundred thousand ; the third, thirty thousand ; and the fourth, eight thousand years.

On this extract we remark, first, on the obvious impossibility of deciding inductively on such vast portions of time in successive duration. Geology makes no such claims, and is not compromised by the wild enthusiasm of its votaries : but then our common sense must be allowed to discriminate between the wild and absurd demands of geologists, and the reasonable claims of geology.

But, further, it is observable, that, even in this case, our author, on geological data alone, is obliged to confess to the fact of an universal Deluge within the last eight thousand years ; and as his other calculations are open to such serious exception, we think our readers will have no great difficulty in making a deduction of three or four thousand years in this case.

But these calculations of the sanguine Frenchman have been outdone in our own country. Mr. M'Culloch thinks it reasonable to say, “We should not exceed, (far from it,) did we allow two hundred thousand years for the production of the coal-series of Newcastle, with all its rocky strata. A Scottish lake does not shoal at the rate of half a foot in a century ; and that country presents a depth of far more than



three thousand feet in the single series of the oldest sandstone. No *sound geologist* will accuse a computer of exceeding, if he allows six hundred thousand years for the production of this series alone."

"Yet what are the coal deposits, and what the oldest sandstone, compared to the entire mass of the strata? Let the computer measure the Apennine and the Jura. Let him, if he can trust Pallas, measure the successive strata of sixty miles in depth which he believes himself to have ascertained; and then he may renew his computations: while, when he has summed the whole, his labour is not terminated. But let the reader supply the figures, which it is useless to exhibit, *SINCE THEY CANNOT BE TRUE.*"\*

This quotation requires but a brief notice. The writer had proceeded on principles which he believed to be scientific; and followed them out into their results, until the sterling sense of the *man* rose in direct rebellion against the conclusions of the *geologist*: his hand refused to write the figures; while his pen recorded the memorable words, "*They cannot be true!*"

An eminent living author thus writes on this subject:†  
 "We are exactly, as to the Creation and the Deluge, independent of the Mosaic record, as Cicero was on the Deity himself, when he wrote his *Natura Deorum*. He saw a number of conflicting opinions on both sides of the question. He perceived that each was supported by men of great names and talents. He had no sacred guide before him, to which, in such a wilderness of fancies, conjectures, appearances, and arguments, he could resort for the discernment and certitude of what was true on this great topic. He felt his own mind affected by all these different reasonings and authorities; and therefore he thought it wise to have no certain opinion about the matter; and so concluded his elaborate investigations.

"If he were now alive, and he, or any man of equal capa-

\* M'CULLOCH'S "Geology," vol. i. p. 507.

† Since these words have been in type, the truly venerable Sharon Turner has ceased to be a *living author*.



city or impartiality, were to write on the Creation or the Deluge, solely from what he read in geologists, and saw in the rocks and fossils, without knowing or believing what the sacred records deliver to us concerning them, he would compose only such another work of opposing notions, opposing facts, opposing reasoning upon them, and opposing inferences from them. He would find men of equal talent and knowledge at variance with each other, and depreciating each other for being of a contrary opinion to themselves. He would state that geologists of such eminence as Dr. Buckland, Mr. W. Conybeare, Mr. M'Culloch, Mr. Fairholme, and many other men of equal ability and science in the country, have declared their belief in an universal Deluge ; and that, abroad, M. Cuvier, M. d'Omalus, M. de Beaumont, and several others, have as publicly announced a similar opinion. But the world presents a catalogue of names as respected, who, from looking at nature with a disbelief of the Mosaic history, have made and support a contrary deduction : and thus, if he sought to settle his judgment on human authorities or on natural phenomena only, it would be but to end in Cicero's conclusion, that the subject was difficult and obscure, but that one of the opinions might be rather more probable than the other."\*

If the opinions of scientific men are thus conflicting and uncertain, are we, on account of this uncertainty, to reject the teaching of the "sure and certain word of prophecy which shineth as a light in a dark place?" Let it not be supposed, as is too often the case, that the certainty of the fact of a general Deluge rests entirely on the statement of Moses. It is three times solemnly referred to by the prophets. (Isai. liv. 9 ; Ezek. xiv. 14, 20.) Our Saviour himself specially alludes to it, and the suddenness of its coming. (Matt. xxiv. 37—39 ; Luke xvii. 26, 27.) Peter refers to it three times, as to an event which had occurred, and to the preservation of Noah as a special act of the Divine favour towards him. (1 Peter iii. 20 ; 2 Peter ii. 5 ; iii. 6.) And

\* SHARON TURNER'S "Sacred History," vol. ii. p. 359.



Paul speaks of it in a similar manner. (Heb. xi. 7.) It cannot therefore be doubted, that it is an authenticated portion of the sacred history of the world.

The amount of the historical evidence by which this doctrine is sustained must also be taken into account. We have seen that memorials of it are incorporated with every system of Heathen mythology ; that three famous Triads arose out of reverential remembrance of the three sons of Noah ; and that traditions of this event are found floating in the memory of mankind in every part of the world. Let us take these particulars together ; and what will be the result ? Let us admit that geological science holds the balances *in equilibrio*, and hesitates to pronounce any positive opinion on this doctrine. We have then the universal religion of mankind, the concurring history of all the nations of the world, and the direct authority of the word of God, all uniting to attest the reality of an universal Deluge. We are content in these circumstances to leave the subject to the decision of every intelligent and Christian mind.

We cannot forbear to add the following excellent sentiments, from an author to whom we have been greatly indebted : “ The true is true, at all times, whether we comprehend or like it, or not ; it is therefore a hasty act of the mind, and not sound judgment, to reject the admission of the Deluge because it does not suit our pre-adopted theories. It is wiser to mistrust *them* than to disbelieve what has been so authoritatively recorded. Most of the last series of geologists, and some of the present, have thought proper to discredit the interposition of the Deluge, and have treated the idea of it, and its supporters, with mingled animosity and contempt. This is to be regretted, and will not deter the friends of intellectual religion from still desiring to see it in friendly harmony and coalition with real scientific knowledge. Nothing is done well by their disunion. The more you study geology, the more you will be convinced, that the opponents of the Mosaic Deluge have not advanced one single step in accounting for the appearances and present state of things without it, nor will any degree of talent or labour



be more successful that may choose to disregard it. For, as it is an event which has really occurred, it will be as impossible to form a true theory of the earth without it, as it would be to write an authentic history of England, and yet discredit or omit the Roman and Anglo-Saxon or Danish invasions.”\*

\* SHARON TURNER'S "Sacred History," vol. ii. p. 307.



## CHAPTER VI.

THE HISTORY OF MANKIND FROM THE DELUGE TO  
THE DISPERSION.

DESIGNS of God in the Deluge—Affecting Situation of Noah at its Termination—Cheering Facts in his Condition and Prospects—Ararat—Noah's Sacrifice—God's Covenant with him—The Rainbow—Noah's Drunkenness—His Prophecy—Condition and Progress of Mankind—Chronology of the Period—Scantiness of Materials for its History—Arphaxad—Cainan—Salah—Migration to Shinar—Time of its Occurrence—Motives which induced it.

THE purposes of Divine Justice, in the punishment of a guilty world, were now executed ; the designs of mercy, in the preservation of Noah and his family, had been fully answered ; the intentions of Infinite Wisdom, as to the future condition of the external structure of the globe, had been gradually accomplished ; the ark rested on Ararat ; and Noah “looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry.” (Gen. viii. 13.)

It must be evident to every one who carefully peruses the sacred narrative, that the Divine Being must have had some design in the infliction of the Deluge, beyond the punishment of a sinful generation by an instant and violent death. If this only had been intended, it could have been accomplished in a single day ; while, in the case before us, Noah was confined in the ark an entire year.

We think it extremely probable that this was designed to teach, that the Almighty in this procedure displayed a great and comprehensive purpose respecting the future destiny of mankind, and of the world which they were appointed to occupy. The length of time during which the waters covered the earth, must have produced a powerful impression on the family of Noah. It must have convinced them that nothing was too hard for the Lord, and that, in carrying out his plans, whether of judgment or of mercy, his resources of wisdom and power were fully equal to his designs. Besides, this lengthened period allowed the exercise and use



of natural causes, for the accomplishment of the Divine purpose, to the fullest possible extent. We do not refer to this, to derogate from the miraculous power which was exerted on that occasion ; but we incline to think that this power was rather enhanced by the proof thus afforded, that all the energies and elements of the natural world were under the immediate guidance and control of the moral Governor of mankind. Again : it appears to us that this extended period, during which *the greater part* of the world was covered with water, might, under the Divine appointment, (seeing that “ a day with the Lord is as a thousand years,”) have afforded opportunity for accomplishing many of those changes in the surface of the earth, which geology has so carefully observed, and so strikingly exhibited. Not that we entertain, for a moment, those extravagant theories which have been propounded, such as the entire dissolution of the globe, and its re-construction, at the time of the Deluge. On the contrary, it appears certain that a large portion of the surface of the earth remained after the Flood in exactly the same state as that in which it had previously been. Hence we find Moses pointing out the geographical position of Paradise, and of the land of Nod ; and to the same effect is the evidence furnished by the fact of “ the olive-leaf pluckt off ;” proving that in this place at least, not only was the surface of the earth left entire, but that even vegetation continued in vigorous action.

All this had been effected ; and Noah, with his wife and his three sons, and their wives, “ every beast, and every fowl, and whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark,” (Gen. viii. 19,) and again inhabited the earth. These circumstances must have been deeply affecting to Noah and his family. No persons had been so immediately brought into contact with Divine judgments, and preserved, as they had been. The thousands of their fellow-men, with whom they had lived in social intercourse, had been swept away with a sudden and terrible destruction ; they themselves had been confined a whole year in the dreary solitude of the ark ; while the earth lay shrouded in



death, buried beneath a wide expanse of waters. But now they had emerged from that which had been at once their sanctuary and their prison; they again walked forth on the green earth in the sun-light of heaven, and felt that they had been preserved by the mighty power of God, and were appointed to renew the existence of the human family on the face of the earth.

Descending the mountain, and once more entering upon the ordinary business of life, these eight human survivors of the Deluge were to renew the population of the world. Helpless as they then were, amidst the wreck of almost every thing in nature and in social life, in which their hearts had been before interested, or with which their senses had been formerly acquainted, would it have been wonderful if they had loathed the life that was spared to them, and had, in desponding sorrow, laid themselves down to die? Happily, joy in their own escape, and the new hopes which they were encouraged to conceive, gave them vigour and fortitude to struggle with the difficulties of their condition. They saw the former phases of the heavenly bodies, the previous state of the atmosphere, the ordinary revolutions of the seasons, restored. They saw the energy of vegetation again exerted over the surface of the earth. They saw the lower animals again rejoicing and multiplying around them. They forgot their griefs in a recollection of the judgment which others had suffered, and in a contemplation of the mercies with which they themselves were surrounded; adapted their sentiments to their circumstances; clung eagerly together; and looked fondly forward to fairer days.

The ark rested on Mount Ararat. But the precise situation of this mountain has greatly exercised the ingenuity, and perplexed the inquiries, of biblical critics. Shuckford labours to prove that it was situated near Saga Scythia, on the hills beyond Bactria, north of India; while others, and, we think, with better reason, suppose it to be in Armenia. It must be admitted, that Moses has not pointed out the situation of Ararat with the same precision with which he has marked the geographical situation of some other places,



and particularly of Paradise. He simply informs us that the place where the ark rested was one of the mountains of Ararat; but in what part of the world this was to be found, he does not say. Hence there is scope for inquiry and difference of opinion. The conjecture of Shuckford—that it was situated in India—has since been powerfully supported by Mr. Wilford; but, we think, the arguments of Mr. Faber unanswerably prove that Ararat was in Armenia.

Much reliance has been placed, in this argument, on traditions which prevail in both localities, to the effect that the ark rested on those mountains respectively. But when it is remembered, that almost every ancient nation identified the circumstances of the Flood with its own primitive history and geography, but small importance will be attached to any evidence of this kind; and, even apart from this objection, as the traditions which prevail in Armenia must be allowed at least to equal those which abound in India, no decision can result from such data.

The principal argument, then, for identifying Ararat with the neighbourhood of Cashgar is that which is based on Gen. xi. 2, which says, "They journeyed from the east," on their way to Shinar. And it is contended that, as Armenia lies to the north of Shinar, this passage proves that Ararat could not be situated in that country; but that Saga Scythia, on the borders of India, precisely answers this requirement. Several attempts have been made to avoid the force of this objection, by writers who have believed that Ararat was situated in Armenia; and we think that Mr. Faber, following Granville Sharpe, has fairly solved the difficulty. We give his own words: "It does not appear to me, that even this argument would decisively prove the appulse of the ark to have been in Cashgar, supposing our common English version accurately to express the sense of the original; because we are not obliged to allow, that the early post-diluvians travelled in a direct course from Ararat to Shinar. They who contend that Ararat is to be sought for in Armenia, might easily reply, that the builders of Babel first journeyed eastward, then inclined to the south, and lastly turned their



faces toward the west ; which course would obviously make them arrive at Shinar from the east : and they might fairly adduce, in favour of this conjecture, the testimony of Berosus, who expressly asserts that the ancestors of the Babylonians, in order to reach the place of their settlement, travelled by a circuit, or in a circuitous route, from the country where the ark of Xisuthrus landed after the Deluge. But I do not conceive that this is the proper answer ; neither do I conceive that the *circuit* mentioned by Berosus would correspond with such a line of march. The truth of the matter is, that Moses does not speak of *the route* by which mankind arrived at Babel, but of *the time* when they journeyed there. The Hebrew word, ill-rendered in our translation ‘from the east,’ denotes ‘before,’ in the sense either of *time* or *place*. When used to describe the course of the Hiddekel, it intimated, as we have seen, that the river flowed *before* Assyria, not to the eastward of it ; and here it teaches us, in a manner exactly agreeable to the general context of the history, not that the builders of the tower discovered the plain as they journeyed *from the east*, but as they *first* journeyed ; that is to say, in the course of their first general migration from Ararat, near which they would doubtless remain after the Flood, until their numbers had sufficiently increased for the forming of new settlements. In this sense, accordingly, the passage is rightly understood by Josephus, who says not a single syllable respecting any supposed journey from the east ; but simply intimates that, when men *first* ventured to descend from the high ground where the ark had rested, they travelled to the plain of Shinar, which was the first country that they planted.” \*

\* “JOSEPH. *Ant. Jud.* lib. i. cap. iv. sect. 1. He uses the same repetition which I have done. His expressions are, *πρωτοι κατελθοντες*, and *πεδιον εις ο πρωτον αυτους κατοκισαν*. These are plainly his translation of the Hebrew word which is rendered, both by the Seventy and in the English, ‘from the east.’ Bochart, though he prefers this last version, yet fairly mentions, that both the Chaldee and the Jerusalem Targums understood the word as denoting *at first* ; and, to show with how much strict propriety it may be so translated, he adduces Habak. i. 12, where it evidently is incapable of any other meaning : ‘Art thou not, O Lord, from everlasting,’ or, ‘from the first?’ not, it is



This reasoning is quite sufficient to show the great probability that Ararat was situate in Armenia: but this probability approximates nearly to certainty, when we take other considerations into the account. In such an inquiry it must always be an important question, What meaning did the Jews attach to the language of Moses, and what opinion did they form of the geographical situation of Ararat? The reply to this is decisive. Josephus not only translates the passage in the manner which Mr. Faber has recommended, but distinctly states that "the ark rested on the top of a certain mountain in Armenia;" and proceeds to assure us that the most eminent barbarian historians (namely, Berosus the Chaldean, Hieronymus the Egyptian, Mnaseas, Nicholas of Damascus, and a great many more) united in the same testimony, that the ark rested on a mountain in Armenia. The Septuagint confirms this testimony. There are two passages precisely parallel in which the term "Ararat" is used in the Hebrew, as the name of the country into which the sons of Sennacherib escaped after they had slain their father. In 2 Kings xix. 37, the term "Ararat" is retained; but in Isaiah xxxvii. 38, it is rendered "Armenia," clearly showing that, in the judgment of the LXX., Ararat was in Armenia. This opinion was handed down by the Jews, and was generally received by the Christian fathers.

Again: we may observe, that, when Jeremiah predicted the destruction of Babylon by the Medes and Persians, and gave a catalogue of the countries which should furnish troops to the invading army, he mentions "Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz." (Jer. li. 27.) Now it is universally admitted that Ashchenaz is on the banks of the Euxine Sea, and close to Armenia; but we are not compelled to rely on this circumstance: the same prophet, when making out the route

almost superfluous to observe, 'from the east.' (Boch. *Phaleg*, lib. i. cap. 7, p. 30.)—"Origin of Pagan Idolatry," vol. i. p. 309.

It may be added, that this sense of the term is recognised by our English translators, and it is consequently rendered "ancient," "of old," "before," in numerous passages.



of this same army, says that it should come "out of the north;" (Jer. l. 3;) a direction quite applicable to Armenia, but utterly at variance with the supposition that Ararat was located in the borders of India. Hence it appears that sacred and profane history unite to teach us that the ark rested on a mountain in Armenia.

And now, if these investigations, and the remarks contained in a preceding chapter, have resulted in making us acquainted with the truth, it will follow, that the district in which Noah and his family emerged from the ark, and proceeded to cultivate the ground, is precisely the geographical district in which Eden was situated. Mr. Faber has gone at length into this subject, in his "Origin of Pagan Idolatry," and has, in our judgment, fully established the fact. Thus the early population of the world, after the Deluge, lived in the same locality as that which had been the seat of the first human family.

Although it may be desirable to fix on the country in which the ark rested, it must be useless at this time to attempt to define the exact spot, or the particular circumstances of its appulse. It will be sufficient for us to have ascertained that Noah, his family, and all that were with him in the ark, disembarked in Armenia.

As Noah had entered the ark by the special appointment of God, he did not leave it until commanded so to do. Immediately on taking up his residence once more on solid ground, before he applied himself to any of the numerous claims upon his attention which his circumstances put forth, he built "an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar." (Gen. viii. 20.) We think this fact strongly confirmatory of the views which we have already given, respecting the origin and character of sacrifice. The devout feeling and fervent faith with which this offering was made, secured to Noah the Divine acceptance; and Jehovah graciously promised that he would not again smite every living thing as he had done, but continue unto the earth, during the remainder of the period allotted for its existence,



a regular succession of seasons, and a continuance of providential blessing. (Verses 21, 22.)

As the terms in which this passage is given by our English translators are calculated to injure the sense, we give those emendations which eminent critics have suggested. In chapter viii. 21, our authorized version says, "And the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." This language evidently "makes the sacred author speak quite contrary to what he designed, and is an affront to the justice, goodness, and wisdom of God, who, by this translation of *for* instead of *though*, might seem to bless man for his evil imaginations."\* It should therefore be read, "I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake, *though* the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth."†

Again, in verse 22 we read, "While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." "This rendering confounds the four seasons of the year, which Moses exactly distinguishes; for the Hebrew word *khōr*, which they render 'the cold,' signifies the 'winter,' because of the cold which then prevails; the word *ghōm*, translated 'heat,' signifies 'the spring,' because of the heat that abounds in Judea about the end of the spring, in the months of May and June, which is the harvest-time in that country; whence the scripture mentions the heat of harvest. (Isai. xviii. 4.) The word *kah'-yitz*, which they render 'summer,' does indeed signify so; but the word *ghōh'-reph*, which they have translated 'winter,' should rather be 'the autumn,' which is the time of ploughing and labouring the ground, as may be seen, Prov. xx. 4.

"It is true indeed, as M. Le Clerc has observed on Gen. viii. 22, that the year is sometimes only divided into two

\* GLEIG'S edition of STACKHOUSE'S "History of the Bible," vol. i. p. 196.

† "Essay for a new Translation," part i. p. 138.



seasons, one of which comprehended the heat of the spring and summer, and is called *kah'-yitz* ; and the other, the coolness and cold of the autumn and winter, and is expressed by the word *ghōh'-reph*, as may be seen, Psalm lxxiv. 17 ; Zech. xiv. 8 : which has occasioned the mistake of the translators ; but Moses here evidently distinguishes the four seasons of the year.\* The whole sentence, therefore, if justly rendered, would run thus : “ While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, winter and spring, summer and autumn, day and night, shall not cease.” It may be observed here, that, this gracious promise most completely refutes the various notions that have prevailed respecting the state of the atmosphere and condition of the earth before the Flood. Many learned men have indulged in the wildest speculations on this subject ; some teaching that the earth enjoyed a perpetual spring, others, that it had no rain, &c. ; while, from the texts considered above, it is clear that the course of nature which had existed prior to the Deluge, was continued. If it had been the Divine intention to introduce an entirely new physical economy, such a circumstance might or might not have been placed on the inspired record ; but if it had been, it could not have been said that such seasons and alternations “ shall not cease,” when they were at that moment for the first time appointed. No language, therefore, can more clearly show that day and night, summer and autumn, winter and spring, seed-time and harvest, had preceded the Flood, as they continued afterwards ; and that this gracious promise was intended to assure the preserved patriarch, that nature should remain in its established course, and that, until the end of the world, God would no more punish the sin of mankind by inflicting universal destruction on the earth.

“ And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that

\* “ Essay for a new Translation,” part ii. p. 188.



moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea ; into your hand are they delivered. Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you ; even as the green herb have I given you all things. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat." (Gen. ix. 1—4.) It is worthy of observation, that this grant, or charter of privileges, is an extension of that which was made to Adam. In the first place, it is much stronger in its terms. To Adam it was said, "Have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." (Gen. i. 28.) But unto Noah it is declared, "The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth," &c. It is also more extensive : to Adam was granted for food "every herb bearing seed, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of the tree yielding seed." (Gen. i. 29.) But Noah and his sons are told, "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you ; even as the green herb have I given you all things." Yet, looking at the terms in which Noah is addressed, and the express prohibition of blood with which the grant is accompanied, we are confirmed in the opinion previously expressed, that parts of animals offered in sacrifice had been eaten before this time ; and that, even now, the general permission to eat animal flesh, accompanied with the prohibition of the use of "the blood, which is the life," places this practice before us, as analogous, in some degree, to the sacrificial rite ; and while it seems intended to teach man, that his life is strengthened and supported by that which involves the death of another living creature, the eating of animal food is calculated through all time to impress upon him the elementary principle of revealed truth, namely, vicarious sacrifice.

But a very important part of the Divine address to the family of Noah, and one which has occasioned the greatest amount of perplexity to expositors, is that which refers to the rainbow as a token of the Divine covenant with man. The sacred narrative says, "And I will establish my covenant with you ; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood ; neither shall there any more be a



flood to destroy the earth. And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: and I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth." (Gen. ix. 11—17.)

We feel great difficulty in offering any exposition of this passage. The fact, that the bow here spoken of is the rainbow, has, we believe, never been disputed. But then it is alleged that, as the rainbow is an ordinary result of an immutable natural law, it must frequently have been seen before the Deluge; and, if so, that it could not be any sign or assurance of this covenant which God had been graciously pleased to establish with the new world. We might easily fill pages with the conflicting opinions of learned men on this subject; but we are disposed to receive all these speculations with great qualification. It does not appear to be certain, even admitting the rainbow to have been common before the Flood, that it could not be an efficient token of the Divine "covenant." Nothing appears more probable than that Noah and his sons, having witnessed the terrible effects of the Deluge, should have afterward looked with extreme apprehension even on a shower. Josephus confirms this surmise, and states, "But as for Noah, he was afraid, since God had determined to destroy mankind, lest he should drown the earth every year; so he offered burnt-offerings, and besought God, that nature might hereafter go on in its former orderly course, and that he would not bring on so



great a judgment any more, by which the whole race of creatures might be in danger of destruction; but that, having now punished the wicked, he would, of his goodness, spare the remainder, and such as he had hitherto judged fit to be delivered from so severe a calamity." The Jewish historian goes on to describe the sacrifice of Noah in connexion with his prayer, and God's gracious acceptance of both; adding, that the Almighty assured the pious patriarch that he would no more destroy the earth with a flood; and promised, "If I shall at any time send tempests of rain in an extraordinary manner, be not affrighted at the largeness of the showers; for the waters shall no more overspread the earth; but I will give you a sign that I have left off my anger by my bow."\* It does, therefore, seem admissible, that the bow, although often seen before, might, by the special appointment of God, minister confidence and hope to the family of Noah as a sign of the covenant which the Divine mercy had established with mankind. We think this possible; but we are bound to say that it does not, in our judgment, afford the best exposition of the subject.

We have not, in the whole range of scripture history, any case similar to the one before us, explained in this manner. We have indeed many instances in which the Lord has condescended to give signs to his creatures. Unto Ahaz he said, "A virgin shall conceive," &c.; (Isai. vii. 14;) unto Abraham, a "smoking furnace and a burning lamp" were displayed; (Gen. xv. 17;) unto Hezekiah, the shadow went ten degrees back on the dial of Ahaz; (2 Kings xx. 11; Isai. xxxviii. 8;) and, in the case of Gideon, "the fleece was wet, and all the ground about it was dry;" and then afterward, "it was dry, and all the ground about was wet." (Judges vi. 38—40.) But, in all these cases, we have something new in nature,—no mere application of a well-known pre-existing phenomenon. We do not think that the case before us should be so interpreted as to form an exception to this general rule. Yet we do not

\* JOSEPHUS'S "Antiquities," lib. i. cap. 3. sect. 7, 8.



clearly see our way to a satisfactory solution. The passage presents an indeterminate problem on the ground of insufficient data. We will not dogmatize on the subject; but venture to suggest what appears to us to be the most probable solution,—that this bow had not been seen prior to the Flood; and that some change at that time took place, either in the state of the atmosphere or in the refrangible power of drops of rain, which then produced, and still continues to produce, the beautiful phenomenon which we call the rainbow.

We do not perceive any thing unreasonable or extravagant in this supposition. A very slight change of the kind we have alluded to, would make the rainbow visible on the surface of the earth, even if it had never been visible to man previously. At all events, but very few of those who have discussed this subject will be able reasonably to “cast a stone” at this conjecture. Those who suppose mountains to have been sunk, ocean-beds to have been raised, or the rocky substance of the earth to have been dissolved, will scarcely demur to the possibility of a small change having taken place in the state of the atmosphere, or in the refrangible power of rain; especially when it is certain that great electrical changes must have accompanied such an event as the Deluge.

Whatever becomes of this conjecture, it is evident that traditions of the rainbow as a good omen were preserved by mankind for many ages, and that it was generally incorporated with their mythology.

Both Greeks and Romans deified this beautiful object under the title of Iris, or “the messenger of the gods.” Homer alludes to the rainbow as a sign appointed by the son of Saturn. Thus:—

“Splendour diffusing, as the various bow  
Fix’d by Saturnian Jove in showery clouds  
A sign to mortal men.” \*

And to the same effect Virgil speaks:—

\* COWPER’S *Iliad*, book xi.



“Those envied rites Saturnian Juno views,  
And sends the goddess of the various bow.”

The ancient Scandinavian mythology preserves the same allusions, and makes the rainbow a bridge which reaches from earth to heaven.\*

It is equally curious, that Fohi, the great father of the Chinese nation, who is supposed by Shuckford and others to be the same with Noah, is said to have been the son of a daughter of heaven, who conceived him by having been encompassed with a rainbow.†

We come now to speak of an incident in the life of Noah which has been supposed to reflect great discredit on the patriarch, and which presents a subject of considerable difficulty to the historian of his age. The Mosaic narration of this event runs thus: “And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: and he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father’s nakedness. And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him. And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.” (Gen. ix. 20—27.)

We have here a singular fact, and a remarkable prophecy.

With respect to the event itself, we cannot but think that there is more in it than meets the eye. The subject is exceedingly obscure, and very delicate; and, as a consequence, forbids that extent of investigation which in other circumstances might not only be allowable, but absolutely requisite.

\* “Edda,” fable xv.

† “Asiatic Researches,” vol. ii. p. 375.



The principal objections which we have felt to the commonly-received explanation of this text, are so well and so forcibly stated by a learned author, that, although we neither coincide with him in every sentiment, nor exactly approve the spirit of some of his remarks, we are induced to record his language :—

“The common tale is that Ham, seeing his father in an indecorous attitude, was much amused, and laughed, and ran to tell his brothers of the fun. In which case he retained a good deal of the school-boy in his composition, considering that he was a hundred years old. If he laughed, and encouraged others to laugh, he committed a culpable act of disrespect, which might induce an offended father to curse the author of it rashly, and in his sudden indignation. But it would not induce God to inspire him with a prophecy, making no allusion to the act, and not even naming the offender, but relating to the whole scheme of religion. What has the descent of the Messiah from Shem to do with a man’s laughing at a casual, a visible, and a totally unimportant occurrence? It is difficult to find, in all scripture, a misfortune of less moment, and more devoid of natural bad consequences, than that which befell Noah, or an offence of a more minute character, and more unworthy to be recorded, than that which vulgar misconstruction imputes to his son. Yet the momentous nature and consequences of both are apparent, first, in their being at all recorded in a history of such brevity; and, secondly, in their giving rise to predictions so general and important; not to mention the way in which they were commemorated in the Orphic Mysteries. The levity imputed to Ham is a trifle beside the offence of Reuben; and any body, by comparing the qualified malediction pronounced upon the latter, will more strongly feel how disproportionate is the magnitude, and how inapplicable the topics, of Noah’s song to the pretended occasion of it. The Book of Genesis says not one word about any laughter or derision; and those who have made themselves busy in supplying the omissions of that brief



text should not have resorted to such a puerile interpretation."\*

We know not what impression these remarks will make on our readers: but we freely confess, they have been sufficient to convince us that the commonly-received version of this incident cannot be true. But then the question returns, What is the real import of this portion of holy scripture? Two modes of solving the difficulty have been resorted to, which we shall briefly mention, leaving the reader to form his own opinion.

First: It has been intimated that the conduct of Ham and Canaan toward Noah was very much worse than disrespectful behaviour on account of having seen him in an indecent posture; that it included a mutilation of the most revolting and barbarous character. This opinion has some sanction from sacred and profane records. In a preceding chapter we identified Saturn with Noah; and Neptune, Pluto, and Jupiter, with Japheth, Shem, and Ham. Let this identity be remembered, and then the mythology of these deities will give a full and elaborate account of the indignity inflicted on the patriarch, by this "cruel operation."† We have another version of the same fact in the case of Uranus. We are told that his sons "mutilated him, and for ever prevented him from increasing the number of his children."‡ We have also a case very analogous in the Egyptian Osiris; but on this point we will not enlarge, and only briefly allude to the testimony of scripture.

We are told that "God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." Yet this command, in respect of all the persons named, was not obeyed: something (we can scarcely suppose it to have been the ordinary course of providence which frustrated any part of the Divine command) prevented

\* "Nimrod," vol. iv. p. 379.

† BANIER'S "Mythology," vol. ii. p. 174; LEMPRIERE'S "Dictionary," article *Saturn*.

‡ This opinion receives great support from the fact, that it is fully sustained by the Phenician annals of Sanchoniathon.



its being accomplished; for we read, "The sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham is the father of Canaan. These are the three sons of Noah; *and of them* was the whole earth overspread." (Gen. ix. 18, 19.) In immediate connexion with this text, and as if to account for the discrepancy, we find the incident on which we are remarking recorded.

Other writers take a different view of the case. They suppose that the pantheistic notion of the divinity of the world was prominent among the vices of the antediluvians; that the principle of fecundity was worshipped under the same form as the Egyptian Phallus; and that the sin of Ham was a defection from God, and a relapse into this abomination of Paganism; that the incident of his father's having drunk freely, and fallen to sleep uncovered, was taken hold of as the opportunity of promulgating those Heathen and impure sentiments in the new world; that therefore Noah, on coming to himself, being aware of this conduct, delivers a series of predictions which refer to the entire scope of religion.

We leave this subject to the reader's judgment, and direct attention to the important prediction delivered by the patriarch on this occasion. This, like most of the ancient prophecies, was delivered in metre. The following is Bishop Newton's translation:—

"Cursed be Canaan;  
A servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.  
Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Shem;  
And Canaan shall be their servant.  
God shall enlarge Japheth,  
And he shall dwell in the tents of Shem,  
And Canaan shall be their servant."

We take too limited a view of this prediction, if we confine it to the persons who are named. Neither the blessing nor the curse appears to stand exclusively connected with the individuals themselves; but they relate to their posterity. We have, therefore, the singular combination of a Divine judgment on an action that had occurred, with the result of God's prescience in regard to future and contingent events;



and the whole arraigned, judged, and visited with prospective punishment. Nor are we to suppose that there is any thing forced or unnatural in this procedure. The children of Ham, and more particularly the descendants of Canaan, were remarkable for having generally manifested a spirit and a conduct analogous to that which is exhibited and reprehended in the text.

Take, for instance, the case of the cities of the plain. The conduct of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrha has covered them with everlasting infamy. Again : with respect to the general character of Canaanitish nations, let the reader peruse Leviticus xviii., and pay particular attention to the 24th and following verses ; and chapter xx., specially regarding the 23d verse ; and it will be seen how fully and how fearfully the persons against whom this malediction was denounced had, in process of time, rendered themselves obnoxious to its righteous punishment. This is not the place to enlarge on the fulfilment of this prophecy. We therefore briefly observe, that it was evidently intended to convey the promise of a blessing to Shem and Japheth. To the first, a blessing is given of a strictly religious character : “Blessed of Jehovah, my God, be Shem ;”<sup>\*</sup> and we all know that this promise was abundantly redeemed. The truth of God was, by a continued series of divine revelations, maintained in this family ; in it the church of God was founded, and continued for many generations ; and from this tribe, “as concerning the flesh, Christ came.”

Japheth, also, had a blessing : he should be “enlarged,” and dwell in the tents of Shem. We do not know how far the following exposition will be deemed admissible. It is certain, that, in the early history of the world, the descendants of Japheth remained in obscurity. All the most ancient and most powerful nations—Assyria, Persia, Egypt, and Israel—were descended either from Shem or Ham. Japheth’s family, scattered over the north and western portions of Europe, were little known. But, according to the

<sup>\*</sup> BISHOP NEWTON’S “Dissertations,” p. 14.



promise, they have been enlarged, evidently by the providence of God, until, at the present time, Japheth exercises a ruling influence over almost the whole earth. But we think the last clause of this prediction may be fairly referred to the religious condition of Japheth. "He shall dwell in the tabernacles of Shem." He, too, shall be religiously exalted; and, when the elected house of Shem shall be unfaithful to the spiritual purposes of God, then Japheth shall be grafted, as it were, on its stock; be introduced into the sacred tabernacle; and, dwelling in the holy house which Shem had inhabited, shall constitute the visible church of Christ on earth.

We have now to consider the condition and progress of mankind. No doubt whatever can be entertained, that Noah's family located near Ararat. Here husbandry was prosecuted, vineyards planted, and all the arts of life exercised. In this manner the four families provided for their wants, and made provision for the progressive increase of mankind.

A long and patient prosecution of this course must have been continued. Many years elapsed before any thing like a community was produced. We have, in fact, again to trace onward the increase of a family into a population. And here, more than in any other portion of history, we see the importance of obtaining a clear and accurate chronology. In the first part of the Preliminary Dissertation, we have given our reasons for preferring that system of chronological numbers found in the Septuagint; and we shall not repeat what has been written. Yet, it is necessary to call the attention of the reader to the important fact, that Ussher, following the Hebrew chronology, allows but a century to elapse from the time of the Deluge to that of Peleg, when the Dispersion took place. The extreme improbability of this assumption is so clearly shown by Dr. Russell, that we cannot do better than transcribe his words:—

"If we confine our speculations to the statements of the holy scriptures, we must admit, that, at the end of the first



century, the descendants of Noah could not have multiplied to any great extent. Even on the basis of the Hebrew genealogy, we cannot, in that interval, establish more than three generations: for Arphaxad lived five-and-thirty years before he begat Salah; and Salah lived thirty years, and begat Eber; and Eber lived five-and-thirty years, and begat Peleg. The renovated race of mankind, be it remembered, too, proceeded from the three sons of Noah only; there being no mention made of any children born to that patriarch himself after the Deluge. Were we to assume, then, the largest number that the laws of nature and of probability will warrant, as the issue of the three families in the course of a hundred years, we shall find it much too small to be consistent with the great objects which appear to have been contemplated by those aspiring individuals who founded the Babylonian monarchy.

“In the first generation which proceeded from Noah’s household, we count only sixteen sons; namely, seven in the family of Japheth, four in that of Ham, and five as the progeny of Shem. Suppose there was an equal number of daughters, and that all the cousins in the three families intermarried with one another, and we shall then have sixteen couples, upon whose prolific qualities we are to rely for the amount of the second generation. But let us take along with us, that at least ten years after the Flood must have passed away before sixteen sons and sixteen daughters could have been born in the houses of Shem, Ham, and Japheth; and, moreover, that, as thirty-five appears to have been the usual age for marriage, the first generation could not begin to have children till about the fortieth year of the new era, on the average, of all the families. Let us further suppose that all the grandchildren of Noah were as fruitful as their parents had been, and that every couple produced five sons and five daughters; the result will be sixteen multiplied by ten, or one hundred and sixty human beings in the second generation. These were, of course, the contemporaries of Salah, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem.

“The next descent, or that to which Eber belonged,



would, on the principles of this hypothesis, be increased five-fold ; for as a hundred and sixty individuals constitute eighty couples, and as every couple is supposed to procreate ten children, the product of eighty multiplied by ten is eight hundred, the amount of the third generation born in the new world. The succeeding generation, or that in which Peleg flourished, cannot be included in the first century after the Flood ; for Eber, the father of the patriarch just named, and who in this particular may be taken as the representative of his age, did not marry till the beginning of the second century. The number of mankind, therefore, at the time when, according to the Masorite chronology, the Babylonian monarchy was founded, would be as follows :—

|                                               |       |
|-----------------------------------------------|-------|
| The family of Noah saved in the ark .....     | 8     |
| The first generation, or that of Arphaxad ... | 32    |
| The second generation, or that of Salah.....  | 160   |
| The third generation, or that of Eber.....    | 800   |
|                                               | <hr/> |
|                                               | 1000  |
|                                               | <hr/> |

“That I have not withdrawn from this hypothetical calculation any element which could be properly used for augmenting the number of Noah’s descendants in the first century, will be seen by any reader who shall take the pains to examine with attention the tenth and eleventh chapters of Genesis. It will be found, that, instead of the eighty males which I have allowed for the second generation, the great-grandsons of Noah, such at least as are mentioned in scripture, did not exceed thirty-six. In the house of Japheth there is a record of 7 ; of Ham, 24 ; of Shem, 5 : total, 36.

“Nor has any deduction been made for accidental or violent deaths. Every individual born in the course of the hundred years is not only supposed to have lived throughout the second and third generations, but also to have married and become the parent of ten vigorous children ; and yet the aggregate amount of the human race at the termination of the first century is bounded by the limits of one



thousand, consisting of both sexes, and of all ages. In such circumstances, the number of men fit for labour, for the toils of the chase, and the fatigue of war, would hardly reach the moderate sum of three hundred. It is therefore extremely improbable, that cities and empires were founded at so early a period ; or that the history of any nation can be traced back through any records or monuments now existing to an epoch so near the universal Deluge.”\*

These facts and arguments are conclusive against the abbreviated chronology, and are calculated to cast important light upon the condition of the families by whom the postdiluvian world was peopled. Other reasons will be shown, as we proceed to trace the progress of the several generations.

In this sketch we shall follow the line of Shem, as being best defined, and affording us the largest amount of information. The portion of time which may be allotted to this patriarch is, from about the hundredth year after the Deluge to the birth of his grandson Canaan. During this period little remains to be recorded. Had we ample details of the events which took place, circumstances of great interest might be brought under our notice. Three families miraculously preserved, as had been the children of Noah, taken from a world of cultivation and learning, and at the same time of the greatest wickedness, and brought to found an infant settlement in a new world, must have had much to do in treasuring up portions of knowledge, in preserving the practice of useful arts, guarding against the rise and prevalence of ungodliness ; while it was necessary to husband their resources, and procure subsistence for themselves and their children. But a veil is thrown over all these facts. The imagination may paint reasonable pictures of this infant society, the fancy may supply the colouring after nature ; but the result is not history.

We are therefore left to the few facts which the scriptures record, and to the inevitable inductions which arise from them. These are sufficient to satisfy us, that during the

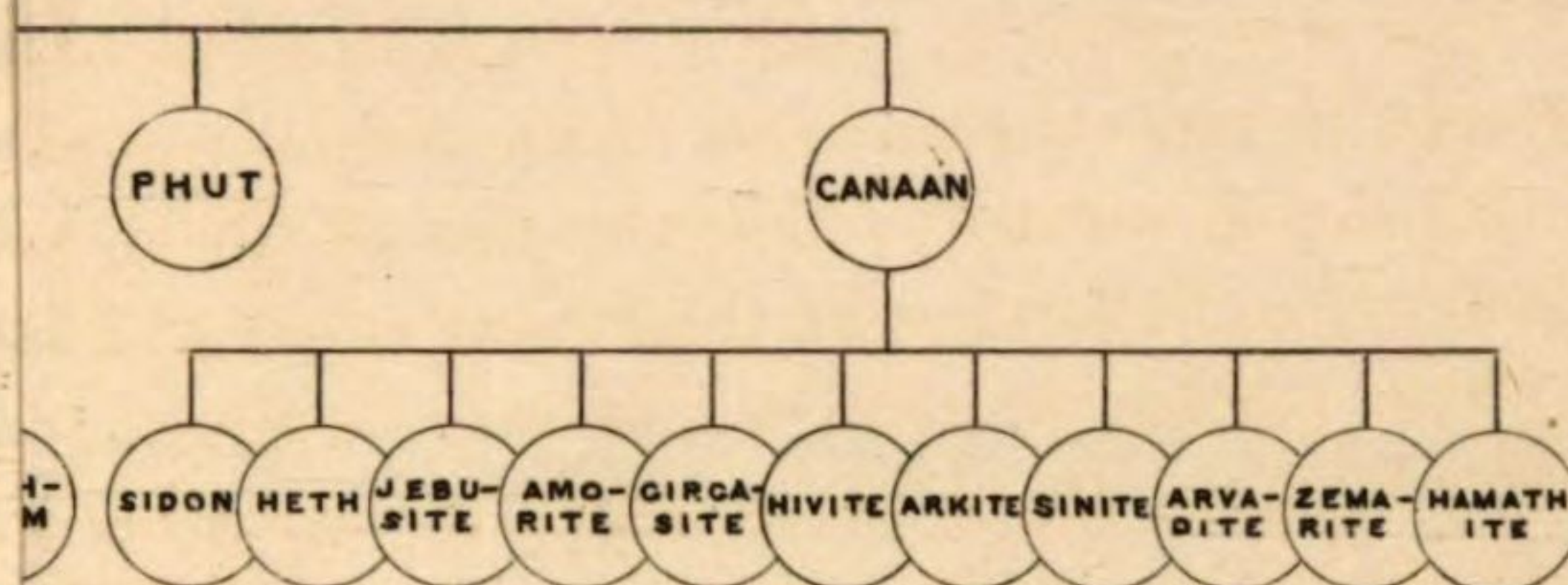
\* DR. RUSSELL'S "Connexion," vol. ii. p. 17.



OF ABRAHAM,

Genesis, X & XI.

AM





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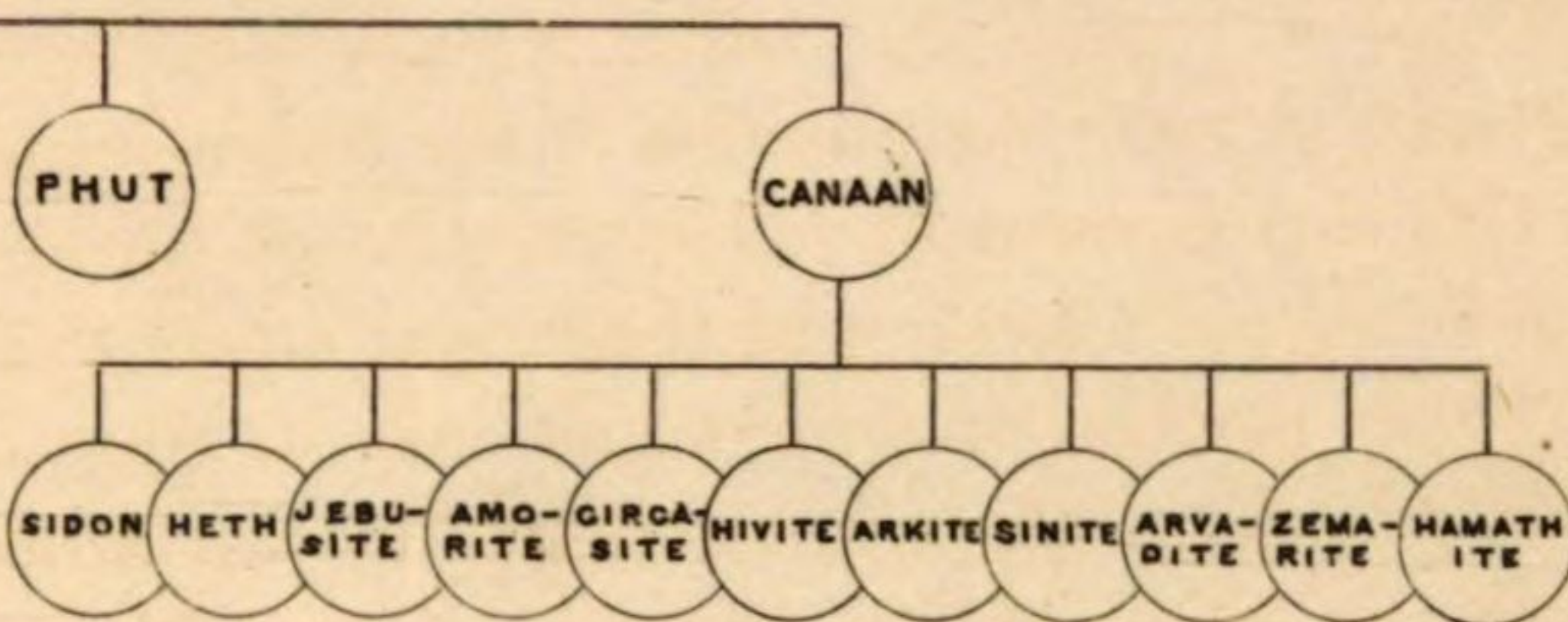


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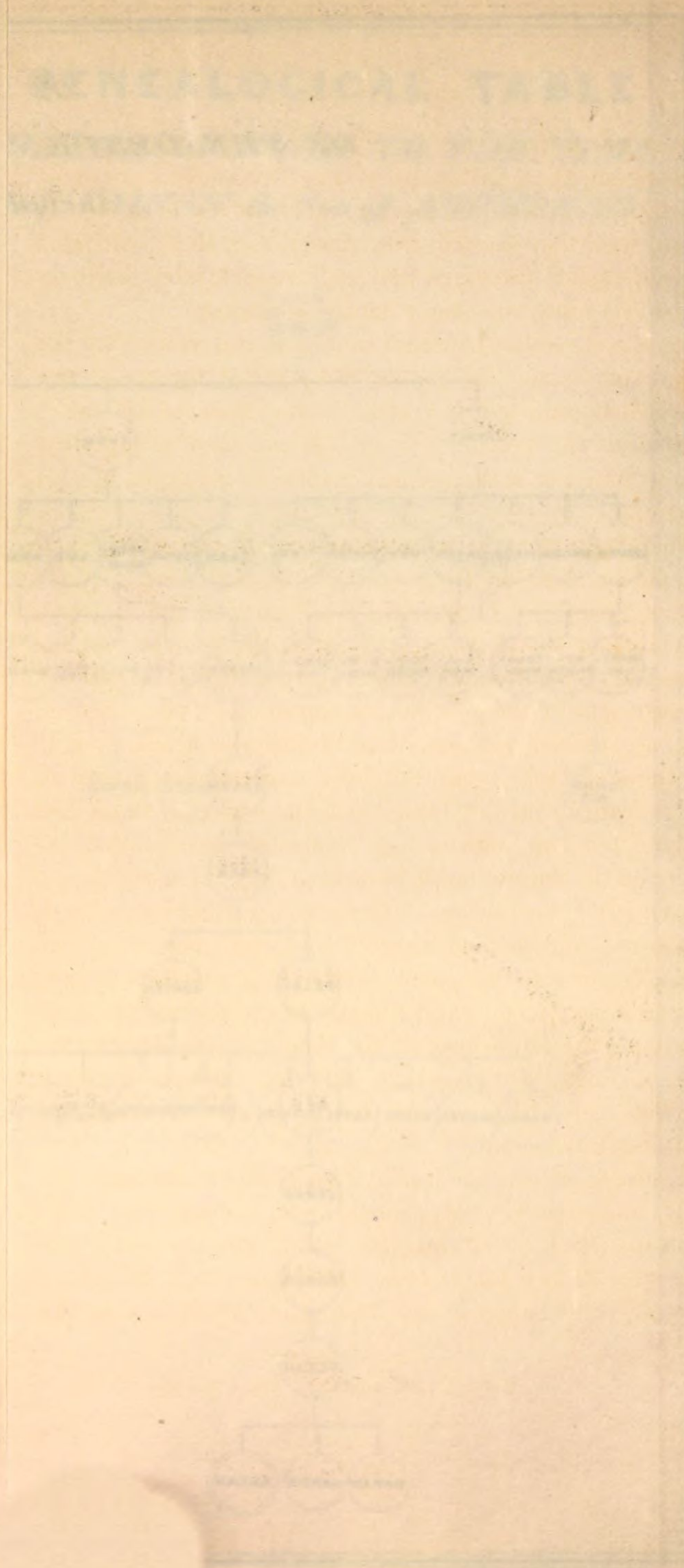
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time in which Shem may be regarded as the representative of mankind, the inhabitants of the new world constituted one family. There can be no doubt, as we have already stated, that they located near Ararat, and there cultivated the soil, erected dwellings, and endeavoured to lay the foundation of a prosperous and extensive community.

*Arphaxad.*—This patriarch was born two years after the Flood, and became the parent of Cainan at the age of one hundred and thirty-five years. As the name of his son is omitted in the present Hebrew Bible, it may be important here to state the reasons which justify the insertion of this generation.

There appears to be no reasonable doubt that this generation did stand in the Hebrew scriptures, until long after the time of Christ. “Prior to the appearance of the *Hexapla*, no chronologer ever entertained the smallest doubt that the name and generation of Cainan were entitled to a place in the catalogue of the postdiluvian patriarchs ; and, moreover, that, as Abraham was described in histories which, even in the times of Origen and Eusebius, were accounted ancient, as the tenth in the line from Noah, the writers of those days could not fail to perceive that, if Cainan were omitted, the father of the faithful must have been only the ninth in succession after the Deluge. Berosus, the Chaldee annalist, alludes to Abraham as a great and righteous man, and skilled in the celestial science, who lived in the *tenth* generation after the Flood. And Eupolemus, in like manner, after describing the catastrophe of the Deluge, takes notice of the same distinguished personage, as being born in a city of Chaldea, called Ur, in the tenth generation succeeding that destructive event.”\*

Evidence of this kind might be easily multiplied ; but it is unnecessary. We should not, indeed, feel called upon to dwell at all on this point, did not Mr. Clinton, who adopts the Hebrew chronology, and Dr. Hales, who generally supports the Septuagint, reject this genera-

\* DR. RUSSELL'S “Connexion,” vol. i. p. 166.



tion. The former appears to rely on the fact just stated, that Abraham was the tenth in the scale of postdiluvian generations; which Mr. Clinton takes to mean ten generations from Noah. But, surely, in such computation, Shem, who was not only born, but married, before the Flood, cannot be included. "In the tenth generation after the Flood," are the words of Berosus,\* and the first of these generations must be that of Arphaxad.

Dr. Hales, although he admits that Demetrius, a Heathen chronologer, who wrote in the reign of Ptolemy Philopator, about B.C. 220, included this generation, thinks himself warranted in rejecting it for several reasons. The most important of these is, "That the Septuagint version is not consistent with itself; for in the genealogies, 1 Chron. i. 24, it omits Cainan, there following the Hebrew." Now it happens, unfortunately for the argument of this usually accurate chronologer, that his assertion is contrary to fact. The eminent author who has been referred to as concurring in the rejection of this generation, may be quoted here in reply to Dr. Hales. Clinton candidly declares: "Hales asserts that the Septuagint, in 1 Chron. i. 24, omits Cainan; which is an incorrect account. Many copies have Cainan in both the passages of 1 Chron. i. In verse 18, Cainan appears in twenty-one copies, collated by Dr. Parsons, including the Alexandrine. In verse 24 he is inserted in six copies."† This is an important fact, especially the retention of the name in the Alexandrine text. It might be necessary to notice the other arguments which the learned author of the "New Analysis of Chronology" has given, if we had intended to rest our case on any refutation of them in detail. But we do not. The point is decided by an unquestioned text of holy scripture. In the New Testament, Luke, when giving the genealogy of Christ, says that Sala "was the son of Cainan, which was the son of Arphaxad." (Luke iii. 36.) The genuineness of this text has never been disputed; and we are disposed to rest the

\* JOSEPHUS'S "Antiquities," lib. i. cap. vii.

† *Fasti Hellenici*, vol. i. p. 288.



question entirely upon it. If it be admitted that Luke wrote under the plenary inspiration of the Holy Spirit, it must be believed that the quotations from the Old-Testament scriptures which he has made are strictly true. It can be no answer, that the writer was deceived in quoting from a translation, or a vitiated copy; for if this be allowed, he might by the same rule be mistaken in any other way, and the doctrine of efficient inspiration would be made worthless. It is not contended that the circumstance of an evangelist's quoting from the Septuagint version stamps the whole of that version with religious authority; but nothing can be more apparent than that what has been so quoted must be received as truth; or, in the words of Dr. Adam Clarke, "what they" (the New-Testament writers) "have quoted of that version, they have certainly legitimated by such quotation."\* If the inspiration of holy scripture is regarded as any thing more than a name, it is not easy to conceive how this conclusion can be avoided; on this ground we regard the generation of Cainan as clearly and authoritatively taught by the word of God, and as being, in fact, a part of scripture verity.

The researches of that most learned and indefatigable of chronologers, Jackson, confirm this scripture testimony. He says, "It appears very evident that the second Cainan was originally in the Hebrew text, and the Septuagint version derived from it; also, that his name continued in all the Greek and Hebrew copies to the Christian era, and after, to the time of Josephus, and the end of the first century."†

*Cainan.*—The population of the new world must still have been very limited, although gradually increasing. There can be no doubt that they continued in the neighbourhood of Ararat, cultivating the ground, and providing for their increasing wants. During the one hundred and thirty years which elapsed after the birth of Cainan's eldest son, (which, on the plan we have adopted, represents this generation,) Noah died; an event which must be regarded as most

\* DR. ADAM CLARKE'S "Miscellaneous Works," vol. i. p. 369.

† "Chronological Antiquities," vol. i. p. 79.



important in its influence on the rising population of the new world. This eminent patriarch had been so specially favoured with direct communications from heaven, his history had been so eminently identified with the history of mankind, that, during his life, he must have exerted considerable influence over his descendants. He lived after the Flood three hundred and fifty years, and saw four subsequent generations.\* Nimrod was contemporary with Cainan.

*Salah.*—We have no record of the events that occurred in this generation, except the death of Shem. Reasoning from analogy, we have now to regard the population of the post-diluvian world as deprived of every personal witness of the Deluge. Noah and his sons had passed away; the population had greatly multiplied; and the state of society was pregnant with the most important events.

The sacred account informs us, that, while “the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech, they journeyed from the east,” and “found a plain in the land of Shinar.” (Gen. xi. 1, 2.) This brief text distinctly teaches that the entire community (which had, hitherto, dwelt in the neighbourhood of Ararat) now journeyed from thence, and ultimately arrived at the plains of Shinar. We have no means of ascertaining the precise date of this emigration; but it seems most probable that it took place at the beginning of this generation; that is, about the time of the birth of Eber.

A glance at the accompanying genealogical Table will show, that at this time there must have been a considerable population in the world. In the third generation from

\* It is remarkable that, notwithstanding the omission of the name of Cainan from the Hebrew text, and the consequent general rejection of him by historians, there are more traditions preserved of him than of his son Salah. “The Alexandrine Chronicle derives the Samaritans from Cainan; Eustachius Antiochenus, the Saggodians; George Syncellus, the Gaspheni; Epiphanius, the Cajani. Besides the particulars already mentioned, it is said Cainan was the first after the Flood who invented astronomy, and that his sons made a god of him, and worshipped his image after his death. The founding of the city of Harran in Mesopotamia is also attributed to him; which, it is pretended, he so called from a son he had of that name.”—“Ancient Universal History,” vol. i. p. 96, *note*.



Noah, we have sixteen heads of families ; the scriptures only record in the next generation the descendants of seven of these, making thirty-six families. But it is evident that the account is incomplete, Moses only transcribing the descendants of those who stood most intimately connected with the scope of his history.

During the youth of Eber, about one hundred years after the death of Noah, it is probable that this entire company abandoned their residence, and, following the course of the Euphrates, came by a circuitous route to Shinar, making approach to it, according to the words of the sacred narrative, "from the east."

Here they lived, and proceeded to design and execute a work which resulted in the dispersion of the different tribes over the face of the earth. We shall treat of this subject in the next chapter, and at present only refer to those circumstances which seem to cast light upon the history of the time, and to confirm the truth of the chronological arrangement which we have adopted.

According to this scheme, Noah and his sons died in Armenia. The direction of public affairs had therefore passed into the hands of the heads of families, and the most powerful and energetic of these would be sure to exercise the greatest influence. Soon after this time, and probably throughout the entire movements, Nimrod distinguished himself. Now, this person was contemporary with Cainan : he was therefore of mature age in the time of Eber, and probably died in the early part of the life of Peleg. It is, in fact, self-evident that the generation of Nimrod must have had the direction of public affairs about the time of the Dispersion. Arphaxad died just at this period ; his contemporaries must therefore have been the old and infirm men of the age. The generation of Nimrod stood next : with years enough to secure extensive influence, they united physical and mental vigour, and were naturally the leaders of their day. Every other scheme more or less diminishes these strikingly corroborative circumstances, and consequently encumbers the subject with difficulties.



A considerable time must have elapsed from the period when the population first moved from Armenia, before the building of the tower at Babel. Abulfaragi, who lived in Armenia, and had opportunities of collecting traditions on the spot where Noah lived and died, says, that sixty years elapsed from the migration of the primitive families before the conspiracy to build Babel.\* If this be true, the date which we have assigned to this emigration appears to be justified.

The only scriptural mark which we have for defining the period of the Dispersion, is that in which it is said, "Unto Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg; for in his days was the earth divided." (Gen. x. 25.) Many conflicting opinions have been propagated as to the period of Peleg's life, during which this division took place. With all deference to those who think differently, there does not appear to us any reasonable doubt on the subject. The word *Peleg* signifies "division." He was therefore called Peleg on account of this division. The cause must, we think, have existed when the name was given. The division of the earth among the several tribes had, therefore, begun when Peleg was born; and his father, on account of this memorable event, gave him a corresponding name. This appears to be the common-sense explanation of the subject. The gratuitous supposition, that the appellation was given prophetically, is unworthy of serious attention: it is a random guess, without any rational foundation; for we have no reason to believe that Eber was a prophet. Every part of the history harmonizes on this principle. Nimrod probably lived a few years after the birth of Peleg. If the descendants of Noah arrived at Shinar about seventy years after the birth of Eber, there was ample time, during the sixty-four years which afterwards elapsed to the birth of Peleg, for the building of the tower, the consolidation of the power of Nimrod, and for the Dispersion.

It will also be observed, that we make no alteration in the chronological numbers of the Septuagint. We receive them

\* HALES'S "Chronology," vol. ii. p. 47.



throughout this whole period, and find that they supply us with a consistent and satisfactory key to the entire history.

There is another question arising out of this part of the narrative, of very considerable consequence. It respects the motives and influence which induced this emigration. That the population which had grown up in Armenia, around Mount Ararat, should unite in leaving their home, abandoning all their cultivated lands, and, *en masse*, with all their little ones and property, journey into a distant land, appears so strange and unaccountable, that it is necessary to adduce some rational motive, or some powerful influence, to account for the proceeding.

The scripture account, although it explicitly states the fact, is silent respecting the motive: but, in our judgment, this is implied in the words of Moses. He says, "And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there." (Gen. xi. 1, 2.)

As the terms "language" and "speech" can only apply to mankind, it will not be doubted that the phrase, "the whole earth," must mean the entire human family then living. The pronoun "they" in the second verse confirms this view, and refers the journey to the whole of the human race then in existence. The word can have no other application. Holy scripture, then, does teach us that the whole population had left Armenia, and journeyed in company, until at length they arrived at the plains of Shinar.

But the question recurs, What occasioned this procedure? To this inquiry the words of Moses do not supply any direct answer. There are, however, circumstances which, carefully considered, may cast some light upon the subject, even if it should not be sufficient to dissipate all doubt and uncertainty.

An opinion has extensively prevailed, and is sanctioned by considerable evidence from ancient history and tradition, that Noah, by Divine appointment, made a division of the earth amongst his descendants. The following words of Moses



have been quoted in support of this notion: "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." (Deut. xxxii. 8.) But it will be seen that this text, while it very clearly teaches that the division of the earth and the dispersion of mankind took place under the immediate guidance and influence of Divine Providence, does not, in any way, intimate that Noah had received information on the subject, or had any part in its accomplishment. Yet many Heathen traditions appear to support this opinion. Hence we read "that Chronus, the god of time, or Saturn, divided the universe among his three sons; allotting the heaven to Jupiter, the sea to Neptune, and hell to Pluto. But Chronus represented Noah, who divided the world among his three sons, allotting the upper regions of the north to Japheth, the maritime or middle regions to Shem, and the lower regions of the south to Ham." \*

This same view is supported by Armenian traditions, handed down by Abulfaragi. But we think that this hypothesis must be received with very great qualification. The "Universal History" calls it "groundless;" and there does not appear any reason for believing that Noah possessed in himself any right to dictate a specific division of the earth among his descendants. Yet such a division on a regular plan did take place, and under circumstances which demonstrate the existence of a Divine purpose, and the exercise of Divine power. Although we are left utterly ignorant of the time and manner when this purpose was first made known to man, we have reason to believe that it was prior to the building of Babel; and there can be little doubt that it was before the emigration from Armenia. The tower was built as a means to prevent an apprehended dispersion; "lest," said they, "we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." (Gen. xi. 4.)

If, then, the Divine purpose of a regular division of the

\* HALE'S "Analysis of Chronology," vol. i. p. 351.



earth among the several families of mankind, was the subject of a special revelation from God to man, it seems most reasonable to suppose that it was communicated to Noah, and by him to his children, who were instructed to carry it into effect, when their numbers had sufficiently increased to enable them to take possession of their allotted territories. And, if so, it is possible that the emigration from Armenia was undertaken as the first step toward the accomplishment of this purpose. They might have thought it most desirable to journey in company to some more central situation, before they separated to their several localities. But, in pursuing this object, the tribe of Ham, and especially the house of Cush, appear to have exercised an influence on the entire community, and persuaded them to abandon their intention of separating, and to unite in forming one great combined and permanent empire. This change was perhaps greatly promoted by the inconveniencies felt in journeying, the extreme fertility and desirableness of the plains of Shinar as a permanent dwelling-place, the daring energy and genius of Nimrod, and the numerical power of the children of Ham ; who, as far as the information furnished by holy scripture extends, exceeded the united tribes of Shem and Japheth. Thus the step which appeared to be the first in a course of obedience to the Divine will, terminated in absolute rebellion against the decree of Heaven.



## CHAPTER VII.

## THE DISPERSION.

IMPORTANCE of the Subject—Scriptural Account—Berosus—Eupolemus—The Sibylline Leaves—Hestiaeus—Occasion of the Event—THE BUILDING OF BABEL—The Work of the whole Race—An Act of Religious Apostasy—NIMROD—His political and religious Pretensions—THE CITY—THE TOWER—THE CONFUSION OF TONGUES—Discoveries of Sir William Jones—Ancient Egypt—Localities of the Posterity of Shem—Of Ham—Of Japheth—Concluding Remarks.

THIS is one of the most remarkable events in the history of the world, and one certainly which has exercised the greatest influence over the character, condition, and destiny of mankind.

We have hitherto regarded the population of the post-diluvian world, either as residing in Armenia, or as journeying from thence in one body with a view to a separation, according to their families, that they might occupy the different parts of the earth. With this latter object they travelled to Shinar; but, when arrived there, instead of separating, they resolved to perpetuate their union. “They said, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city, and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth:



and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth." (Gen. xi. 3—9.)

The scriptural narrative of this extraordinary event is abundantly attested by the traditions and records of profane antiquity. Berosus, as quoted by Abydenus, informs us: "They say that the first inhabitants of the earth, glorying in their own strength and size, and despising the gods, undertook to raise a tower, whose top should reach the sky, in the place in which Babylon now stands; but when it approached the heaven, the winds assisted the gods, and overthrew the work upon its contrivers: and its ruins are said to be still at Babylon: and the gods introduced a diversity of tongues among men, who, till that time, had all spoken the same language." \*

Eupolemus wrote to the same effect:—"The city of Babylon owes its foundation to those who were saved from the catastrophe of the Deluge. They were the giants, and they built the tower which is noticed in history. But the tower being overthrown by the interposition of God, the giants were scattered over all the earth." †

The testimony of the ancient Sibylline oracles is perhaps still more important:—

"When the tower  
Rose to the skies upon Assyria's plain,  
And all mankind one language only knew;  
A dread commission from on high was given  
To the fell whirlwinds, which with dire alarm  
Beat on the tower, and to its lowest base  
Shook it, convulsed. And now all intercourse,  
By some occult and over-ruling power,  
Ceased among men: by utterance they strove  
Perplex'd and anxious to disclose their mind;  
But their lip fail'd them, and, in lieu of words,  
Produced a painful babbling sound: the place  
Was hence call'd Babel; by the' apostate crew  
Named from the' event. Then sever'd far away

\* CORY'S "Fragments," p. 34.

† *Ibid.* p. 57.



They sped uncertain into realms unknown :  
Thus kingdoms rose, and the glad world was fill'd." \*

We only add the following quotation from Hestæus, preserved by Josephus and Eusebius :—"The priests who escaped" (from the Deluge) "took with them the implements of the worship of the Enyalian Jove, and came to Senaar in Babylonia. But they were again driven from thence by the introduction of a diversity of tongues; upon which they founded colonies in various parts, each settling in such situations as chance or the direction of God led them to occupy." †

Having placed the preceding concurrent testimonies of these events before the reader, it will be necessary to refer more particularly to some of the important circumstances of the case. In the first place, we are anxious to call special attention to what has been already said in support of the opinion, that the entire population of the world had journeyed to Shinar, and were consequently connected with the building of the tower, and involved in the confusion of language. It is of consequence to insist on this. Many writers of eminence have advocated an opposite opinion, and thus perplexed and confused this part of scripture history. It is alleged that in all probability many branches of the human family diverged into various districts from Armenia; and it is only the family of Cush, or at most a portion of the tribe of Ham, of which Moses speaks in his notice of the transactions at Babel. We will

\* BRYANT'S "Ancient Mythology," vol. iv. p. 103. On this passage Mr. Bryant makes the following observations :—"This Sibylline history is of consequence. It has been borrowed by some Hellenistic Jew, or Gnostic, and inserted amid a deal of trash of his own composing. The superior antiquity of that part which I have laid before the reader, is plain, from its being mentioned by Josephus. Some lines are also quoted by Athenagoras, and Theophilus Antiochenus. But there are passages afterwards which relate to circumstances of late date, such as were in time much inferior to the age of Athenagoras, and still farther removed from the era of Josephus. Upon this account I pay a greater deference to these verses than I do to those which are subsequent. We have here an accurate account of the confusion of speech, and of the demolition of the tower of Babel."

† CORY'S "Fragments," p. 50.



not repeat what has been said on a preceding page in opposition to this notion ; but make the following observations in confirmation of what has been previously advanced.

1. It appears absolutely necessary to account for the universal diversity of language, which is clearly the *principal subject* of the account. If the larger part of the human family were not concerned in the building, they could not have been affected by the curse of confusion. Yet we know that this curse has had universal effect ; and the inference is inevitable, that all the then existing population must have rendered themselves liable to its penalty by their transgression. Besides, this was the very point insisted on, as a reason for the Divine interference : “The Lord said, Behold, the people is one.” (Gen. xi. 6.) Was this the Divine testimony ? And was a miracle necessary to separate this united body, while yet it contained but a single family or the section of a tribe ?

2. Although much reliance is placed on the fact, that the division of the earth among the descendants of Noah is recorded in the tenth chapter of Genesis, while the dispersion from Babel is noticed in the eleventh ; yet, on examination, this reason for believing that the separation took place prior to the building of the tower, is found to be utterly untenable. For, in this account, the entire family of Ham, including Nimrod, is found ; which shows that it does not describe any partial separation of tribes. Besides, in each instance it is said that the lands were divided to “every one after their families, after their tongues, in their nations.” (Gen. x. 5, 31, 32.) This fully proves that the account refers to a division of the earth, and a separation of families ; which was made, not only in respect of the families, but also in reference to their languages, and which, therefore, must have occurred subsequently to the events of Babel.

3. It is clear that this was the case, from the general tenor of the account which Moses has given of the confusion of tongues. Not only does he describe the company that journeyed, as being “the whole earth,” which “was of one language, and of one speech ;” (Gen. xi. 1 ;) but afterward



he repeatedly states that the builders of the tower were "scattered abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth." (Verse 8.) How can this be, if the larger portion of the children of Noah had already emigrated from Armenia to take possession of their appointed locations? It has indeed been contended that the Cushite leaders did afterward extend their dominion into many countries. But, allowing the utmost that can be urged on this head, it can hardly be maintained that the builders of the tower were scattered over the face of *the whole earth*, if there had before been any important separation of families.

In every way, therefore, the idea of a separation of mankind, before the events which occurred on the plains of Shinar, is directly contrary to the scriptural account, and it is also opposed to the uniform testimony of profane antiquity, as set forth in the extracts which we have given.

But, admitting the entire population of the postdiluvian world to have arrived at Shinar on the banks of the Euphrates, and to have there determined to resist the Divine intention of their separation, and to remain united; we see involved, in the motives which prompted such conduct, and in the manner in which it was carried out, some of the most curious questions which the history or religion of the ancient world brings under our notice.

One inquiry suggests itself, which, although it at first appears to have but a remote connexion with the subject, may in reality have an important bearing upon it. It is this: Why, in the predictions of the Apocalypse, is the erring, intolerant, and persecuting church of Rome called "BABYLON THE GREAT?" (Rev. xvii. 5.) There must be a reason for this: what is it? If we regard the later ages of the Babylonian monarchy, we do not find it more remarkable for error, intolerance, or persecution, than the Heathen empires of Persia and Greece; nor so much so as Pagan Rome. Why, then, should the appellation be employed to prefigure the great apostate religious power? We may account for this singular circumstance by supposing that the



conspiracy at Babel was not only a political combination, but a religious defection from the truth and service of God.

It is extremely difficult to collect evidence on such a subject as this. We may first refer to Josephus. He says, "Now the plain in which they first dwelt was called Shinar. God also commanded them to send colonies abroad, for the thorough peopling of the earth, that they might not raise seditions among themselves, but might cultivate a great part of the earth, and enjoy its fruits after a plentiful manner; but they were so ill-instructed, that they did not obey God; for which reason they fell into calamities, and were made sensible, by experience, of what sin they had been guilty; for when they flourished with a numerous youth, God admonished them again to send out colonies; but they, imagining the prosperity they enjoyed was not derived from the favour of God, but supposing that their own power was the proper cause of the plentiful condition they were in, did not obey him. Nay, they added to this, their disobedience to the Divine will, the suspicion that they were therefore ordered separate colonies, that, being divided asunder, they might the more easily be oppressed.

"Now it was Nimrod who excited them to such an affront and contempt of God. He was the grandson of Ham, the son of Noah; a bold man, and of great strength of hand. He persuaded them not to ascribe it to God, as if it was through his means they were happy; but to believe that it was their own courage which procured their happiness. He also gradually changed the government into tyranny, seeing no other way of turning men from the fear of God, but to bring them into a constant dependence upon his power. He also said he would be revenged on God, if he should have a mind to drown the world again; for that he would build a tower too high for the waters to be able to reach; and that he would avenge himself on God for destroying their forefathers.

"Now the multitude were very ready to follow the determination of Nimrod, and to esteem it a piece of cowardice to submit to God; and they built a tower, neither sparing any



pains, nor being in any degree negligent about the work ; and, by reason of the multitude of hands employed in it, it grew very high sooner than any one would expect ; but the thickness of it was so great, and it was so strongly built, that thereby its great height seemed, upon the whole, less than it really was. It was built of burnt brick, cemented together with mortar made of bitumen, that it might not be liable to admit the water. When God saw that they acted so madly, he did not resolve to destroy them utterly, since they were not grown wiser by the destruction of the former sinners ; but he caused a tumult among them, by producing among them divers languages ; and causing that, through the multitude of those languages, they should not be able to understand one another. The place wherein they built the tower is now called Babylon.” \*

To this lengthened extract we add two or three brief notices. “ Nimrod,” says Jonathan ben Uzziel, “ was a powerful rebel before God : wherefore it is said, Since the day in which the world was created, there hath been no such man as Nimrod, powerful in hunting, and a rebel before God. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel the Great.” (Gen. x. 9.) The words of the Jerusalem Targum upon the same verse are these : “ He was powerful in hunting, and in wickedness before the Lord ; for he was a hunter of the sons of men in their language ; and he said to them, Depart from the judgment of the Lord, and adhere to the judgment of Nimrod ! Therefore it is said, As Nimrod the strong, strong in hunting and in wickedness before the Lord.” The Chaldee Paraphrase on the parallel passage in Chronicles is, “ Arab begat Nimrod, who began to prevail in wickedness ; for he shed innocent blood and rebelled against Jehovah.” (1 Chron. i. 10.) The author of the Clementine Books gives this curious narrative : “ Nimrod, a giant, and a magician, Zoroaster, by his arts compelled the star of that evil power, who presides over this world, to give him the sovereignty thereof.” †

Seeing, then, that the testimony of antiquity identifies

\* JOSEPHUS'S “ Antiquities,” lib. i. cap. iv. sect. 1—3.

† “ Nimrod,” vol. i. p. 106.



Nimrod with these transactions, it is necessary that we pay particular attention to the account which the scriptures give us of this person. It is very brief: "And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar." (Gen. x. 8—10.)

The first striking feature in this account is the term "hunter." Does it really refer to the pleasures of the chase, and the destruction of wild beasts? From the general tenor of the account, we should doubt it. Yet, almost all the notices which we have quoted allude to the same thing. An author, who has cast some important light on this subject, observes: "This is one of the instances in which the translators have chosen a secondary and derivative meaning of a word, instead of its primary signification; one of those unfortunate phrases which have contributed so much to instil contemptible ideas respecting the early events recorded in the Bible." He then proceeds to give us an amended version of the text: "He was 'a mighty **CONSTRAINER** before the Lord,' or in the cause of the Lord; and he acquired great fame by it; his efforts were very notable, for it continued a proverb for many ages afterwards, 'Even as Nimrod **THE GREAT INTOLERANT** before the Lord.' " \*

If we could fully rely on this interpretation, it would, to a great extent, solve the difficulties with which this subject is encumbered. We will therefore inquire more particularly into the meaning of the term upon which the entire scope of the passage hinges.

The word גִּבּוֹר-צֹהֵד (*gibbor-tzah'yid*) is not, strictly speaking, a *mighty hunter*, but a *mighty (of) hunting*. Dr. Lee translates it "hunting; game, prey; provisions of any kind:" and he renders the verb, "hunted; laid wait for, pursued, either animals or men." Parkhurst, embracing the entire inflexions of the word, has given us the following: "I. As a

\* MORRISON'S "Religious History of Man," p. 241.



*n.* צַד *the side* of any thing. II. As *n.* מִצַּד *fem.* מִצְדָּה and מִצְוֶדָּה *a narrow pass or defile, enclosing and protecting on each side, a strong hold.* III. In *kal*, retaining the radical ה final, *to lie in wait, to watch on the side* of one. IV. *To come or steal sideways* upon one's game, whether beast or bird, *to catch or take* in this manner. (Gen. xxvii. 3, 33; Lev. xvii. 13; Lam. iii. 52. Compare Job x. 16.) It is also used spiritually for catching or ensnaring souls or persons. (Ezek. xiii. 18, 20, 21; compare Gen. x. 9.) In *niphil*, *to be hunted*, spoken of cities, 'as a forest of beasts is said to be hunted.' (BATE.)" \*

Hence the term used here in reference to Nimrod is repeated in the history of Esau. (Gen. xxv. 27, 28; xxvii. 3, 5, 7, 19, 25, 30, 31, 33.) In this case it is applied indiscriminately to hunting and to the *venison*, or prey obtained by it. In Joshua ix. 5, the same word is used to signify the *provision* of the Gibeonites. In Nehemiah xiii. 15, it is translated "victuals," as it is in 1 Sam. xxii. 10.

From the entire investigation, we incline to believe that the word, in its general acceptation, signifies, "to obtain an object through the united means of power and craft." And in the text under consideration the meaning appears to be, that Nimrod, through the exercise of these qualities, became a mighty man in the earth, and raised himself to great power and dominion.

This certainly harmonizes with the scope of the Mosaic narrative. Nimrod, we are told, "began to be a mighty one in the earth." (Gen. x. 8.) This is clearly said in reference to his having obtained political importance and influence, and preparatory to the announcement of his having set up a kingdom at Babel. Then follow the doubtful words, "He was a mighty hunter before the Lord." (Verse 9.) Commentators, knowing that many of the heroes of profane antiquity had been famous for hunting wild beasts, were readily induced to insert this term in their translation of the text. But it must be evident to the most cursory observer, that this makes an entire break in the narrative, and calls

\* PARKHURST's Lexicon, *sub voce*.



off the attention from the political progress and martial prowess of Nimrod, to the hunting of wild beasts ; a course which we should never expect to find in an account so very brief. If, however, the word refers to the successful exertion of craft and power in subjecting men to his government, (a meaning which, as we have seen, the original will not only bear, but seems to require,) then the words of Moses present us with a clear and consecutive account of the rise and progress of the power of Nimrod. We are told that he first began to be a mighty man (Septuagint, “a giant”) in the earth ; then, that he succeeded so pre-eminently, as to become mighty before the Lord ; that is, mighty in the highest degree, as a *constrainer*, *allurer*, or conqueror,—or perhaps, as Sir William Drummond renders it, “a mighty robber,” or “a mighty spoliator ;” \* and, lastly, that this prowess continued so long, and produced such results, that it made the phrase a permanent proverb.

Great difference of opinion exists respecting the religious character and principles assumed by this daring chief in his ambitious purpose ; some contending that the history of the Gentile nations affords ample evidence that Nimrod departed greatly from the patriarchal faith, and to an awful extent introduced idolatry ; while others as strenuously maintain that he adhered to and upheld the truth, but that he prescribed the manner of its observance, and was therefore chiefly blameworthy for his excessive intolerance.

There does not yet appear to be sufficient light cast upon the subject, to justify a decision between these conflicting views, and it is doubtful whether the information necessary to arrive at a settled opinion on the point is now attainable. Enough, however, is revealed to convince us that the arrogant assumption of Nimrod was religious as well as political ; that he invaded the sacred, as certainly as he did the civil, rights of man.

We therefore agree with a learned author, who asserts that “Nimrod’s pretensions were those of universal monarchy, founded upon catholic high-priesthood.” † It is also

\* “Origin of Empires,” vol. i. p. 93.

† “Nimrod,” vol. i. p. 19.



extremely probable that this assumption was made with some avowed reference to the promise of the woman's victorious Seed. It would require a dissertation to elaborate the facts and reasons which justify this induction. But we briefly observe, it is a great error to suppose that the men who lived in these primitive times were either ignorant of the revelations made by God to the early patriarchs, or that the wicked were then, any more than subsequently, indisposed to turn these gracious promises to their own temporal profit. A careful investigation of the history and religion of the early ages may convince us that the worst features of Heathenism are perversions of primitive truth. The *avatars* of the ancient Hindoos prove that the idea of a Divine incarnation was known at a very early period. The fact that Noah and his three sons were worshipped as deities, and that Nimrod himself was revered as a son of God, must be kept in remembrance. Besides all this, it should be considered that subsequent conquerors have trodden in the same steps. Tamuzin or Zingis-Khan, the mighty hunter of the thirteenth century, who sustained a character closely resembling that of Nimrod, professed to have the title of *Zin-gis*, the *Most-great*, sent down to him from heaven. The royal head of the Scythian church has retained to this day, from what time no man knows, the rank of god incarnate. And even the Institutes of the Brahmins declare that the spirit of the gods dwells in the bodies of kings. Attila, king of the Huns, added to his titles that of *Nepos magni Nembrod, nutritus in Engaddi*, which means that he had been prompted to represent himself as that "man-child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron," and who had been nursed "in the wilderness, in a place prepared of God."

All this shows the operation of a principle introduced in remote antiquity, and still adhered to, as a means of upholding the unrighteous claims of tyrant rulers. But it may be asked, "How can it be shown that Nimrod acted in a similar manner?" Our limits are too contracted to attempt a formal proof; but the following facts may be thought sufficient to render it at least probable:—



Sir William Drummond justly observes, that “these monarchs who considered themselves as representatives of the Deity, and who were flattered by being called the images of the sun, generally gave to themselves various denominations composed of the names of the gods.”\* We know that Nimrod adopted this course, that he was called Belus, and “adored by the Chaldeans under the name of Bel Dominus, and as the image of the sun; and he was called *Zohak*, the ‘just lord,’ by his Persian flatterers: the chiefs of Iran, whom fortune had made his slaves, denominated the conqueror Namurd, Immortal.”† It is plain, therefore, that Nimrod stood at the head of this impiety, and not only assumed a regal, but a sacred and divine, character. To such an extent, indeed, was this carried, that we are told by the learned author to whom we have referred, “that the memory of the monarch seems to have been nearly lost in the celebrity of the god.”‡ Hence Mr. Faber discovers Nimrod among the sovereigns who are celebrated as the aggrandizers of the monarchy, and who is proudly conspicuous under the name of *Mah-Bul*, or *Maha-Beli*, or “the great Belus,” and who gave himself out to be a trans-migratory re-appearance of the first *Beli* or *Maha-Bad*, vouchsafed to mortals for the government of the universe; and who, “as such, would also claim to be a manifestation of the promised Seed of the woman.”§

Much more might be added in support of this view; but we only give what appears to be the obvious result of these inquiries. “Nimrod’s rebellion was antichristian: he was an ἀντιθεός, and his proceedings were not unconnected with the prophecies of true religion; and the unity of all nations under one theocracy, which he sought to effect, was, in fact, claiming to himself an honour which is reserved ‘until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the peoples be.’”||

This conclusion, although not taught by Moses, certainly

\* “Origin of Empires,” vol. i. p. 113.

† *Ibid.* p. 93.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 115.

§ FABER’S “Origin of Pagan Idolatry,” vol. iii. p. 444.

|| “Nimrod,” vol. i. p. 215.



harmonizes with the scripture account, and aids us in apprehending the true bearing of some important texts.

Taken in connexion with the foregoing, the inspired address of Isaiah to a proud and intolerant successor of Nimrod on the throne of Babylon, is seen with a beauty and force not otherwise attainable.

When Nebuchadnezzar, in the pride of his power, had fully carried out the impious principles introduced by the son of Cush, the prophet thus addresses him: "Thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High." (Isai. xiv. 13, 14.) Here is the same regal pride, the same profane assumption of Divine honour.

The conclusion to which we have been conducted also explains that otherwise unintelligible reference to Babylon in the apocalyptic predictions respecting Papal Rome, to which reference has already been made. If Nimrod at Shinar, professing to adhere to the great truths of the patriarchal faith, pretended that he was in some mysterious manner invested with Divine authority, and was therefore empowered to claim political pre-eminence, at the same time that he demanded religious adoration; what could be more pertinent than that the antichristian church, which, professing to be guided by revealed truth, has nevertheless arrogated to herself a political and divine authority essentially opposed to the uniform tenor of scripture teaching, and whose earthly and human head, "as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God;"—what could be more appropriate than that this apostate church should be designated by the appellation of the first apostate nation, and that the thunders of heaven should roll the terrible truth to the ears of the children of men,—that as antichristian Rome sustains the *same character* as apostate Babylon, so they shall be the same in infamy and in perpetual ruin?

Having cleared away some of the most important difficulties of the subject, we may now attempt an outline of the



events which occurred from the arrival of the company at Shinar until their actual dispersion.

Whether the artful policy of Nimrod, or the united influence of the tribe of Ham, had been exerted upon the heads of the community during their journey, we have no means of ascertaining. But it is sufficiently clear that, on arriving at Shinar, they all knew it to be the Divine intention that they should separate, to occupy distant parts of the earth. This is proved by the testimony both of scripture and of profane antiquity. Soon after this, we are taught that they resolved not to separate in obedience to the Divine purpose, but to remain together as an united people. The preceding inquiry has cast some light upon the means which led to this resolution, and the character of the policy which resulted from it. The combined testimony of all the information which we have on this subject, assures us that Nimrod was the directing spirit of the entire movement. He was the principal agent in inducing the multitude to remain at Shinar rather than to disperse abroad over the face of the earth. His principal motive was clearly that of personal ambition ; and he seems to have put himself forward as a Divine person, at least as one specially appointed by Heaven to hold the reins of universal earthly government, and at the same time to exercise supreme authority in religious matters. In this way he broke down the established order of Providence in patriarchal government, and substituted an united monarchical and sacerdotal dominion.

That this dominion was essentially intolerant and tyrannical, there is ample evidence in the traditions and records of antiquity. But in those days, as in more recent times, these aggressions on civil and religious liberty were carried on in a manner calculated to soothe the public mind, and excite popular vanity. The doctrine advanced was, “Let *us* build *us* a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven ; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad.” (Gen. xi. 4.) Here was nothing private or personal put forward : *public* honour was the avowed object : “Let us make us a name.” By this means, the multi-



tude was persuaded that their honour and advantage were the great objects aimed at. In the prosecution of their purpose they determined to build a city and a tower. The first was intended to serve as a permanent dwelling-place. They had hitherto been travelling,—living in tents. This was the same temporary mode of residence which Noah adopted on leaving the ark ; and it is not improbable that no substantial houses had been erected from the Flood until this time. Now, however, having resolved to take up their abiding residence on this spot, they determined to build a city, in which they and their families might permanently reside.

But this was only a part of their purpose ; they likewise resolved to erect a tower. This building has been an occasion of much perplexity to commentators and historians. The Mosaic account simply says its top was to reach to heaven.

We have already had occasion to observe that Paradise stood on elevated ground, and that it was consecrated in the religious estimation of men, not only because it was specially provided by God for the residence of man in his state of innocence, but also because here were the cherubim, and the revolving fire, and the appointed way of access to Divine Mercy. The feelings of religious respect which were entertained for this sacred mount were rather increased than diminished after the Flood ; for then there seemed to be a repetition of the primitive appointment. The ark rested on Mount Ararat, which was consequently regarded as the mount of salvation. Here also Noah offered his sacrifice, which was so fully honoured with Divine acceptance ; and hence, for several reasons, besides their geographical vicinity to each other, these hills became identified in the religious estimation of the people. We may briefly notice the following abstract of these reasons : 1. Both belonged to a common father of mankind, at the beginning, or apparent beginning, of a world. 2. Both were mounts of salvation, or Divine favour. 3. Both were hills of the sacred tree ; the one of the real tree of life, the other of its symbol, the tree of



peace and unction. 4. And, mainly, both were seats of the cherubim, and the glorious presence; the one, of that which stood at the gate; the other, of that which dwelt in the house of Noah, or in the tabernacle of Shem.

It is a clearly-ascertained fact, that the sacred high places of the Heathen were selected and used in religious commemoration of these sacred mounts. We may instance the Capitolium of Rome, which is proved to have had this reference, having been dedicated to Saturn or Cronus;\* and if we were to pursue an extended investigation of the subject, we should find these results: That the Pindaric Mount of Paradise is the tower of Saturn; that Olympus is the Homeric Mount of Heaven; that the Pindaric Olympus of Elis in Greece is the hill of Saturn; that the Capitolium of Rome is the hill of Saturn: their sacred character being thus clearly identified with the events of Ararat.

Another point also has been made sufficiently clear; namely, that in flat and level countries, where natural elevations for these sacred purposes could not be obtained, artificial mounds and erections were resorted to, as the only means of perpetuating a knowledge of those memorable events, and of affording mankind a visible representation of that sacred spot which had been eminently the place of access unto God. Hence we are told in the Roman mythology, that the Capitoline Hill was originally an artificial tower. It seems also highly probable that the pyramids of Egypt and America, as well as the towers of India and of Babylon, were raised with this same object and design.

Whether it was intended to erect an altar with cherubic figures and a burning flame on the summit of this tower, we will not pretend to determine, although it appears likely; but the design was not completed.

The son of Cush had succeeded so far in his purpose, as to have brought the multitude into his views; the building was commenced; the population had therefore really departed from their duty, and had entered upon a course of action

\* DIONYSIUS HALICARNASSENSIS, lib. i. cap. 24.



contrary to the Divine will. At this juncture the all-wise Jehovah interposed. He regarded the erring children of men, and came down to prevent the accomplishment of that impious purpose, of which they were at once the instruments and the victims. That part of the Mosaic narrative which describes the Divine interposition, is unhappily rendered in our authorized version:—"And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do." (Gen. xi. 6.) And yet this language is followed by the entire defeat of their purpose; a proof that there must be inaccuracy somewhere. The "Essay for a New Translation of the Scriptures" offers a consistent version of the text. It says that "the same particle, which is indeed sometimes taken negatively, is evidently here to be taken interrogatively, and is equal to the most express affirmation. We should therefore translate this text with the Flemish revisors and Leusden." This mode gives the passage in the following form: "Behold, they are all one, and have but one language, and this they begin to do. Shall they not be restrained in all they have imagined to do? Yes; we will go down and confound their language, that they may not understand one another." \*

So the Lord confounded the language of the people, that they could not understand one another's speech. On this branch of the subject, as well as on several others which have been discussed, many different opinions have obtained. Speculation and theory have usurped the province of a careful inquiry into the meaning of holy scripture, and of a laborious investigation into the early history of mankind. Such an inquiry proves that Moses has given a strictly true, although a very brief, outline of this great event; and that all those opinions which have been promulgated, teaching that this confusion affected their sentiments, opinions, or pronunciation, are fanciful and incorrect.

\* "Essay for a New Translation," part i. p. 131.



The text of scripture clearly teaches that the Almighty miraculously confounded the language of the multitude at Babel, that they might not understand one another's speech, and that therefore they were scattered abroad over the face of the earth. From this account we learn, not that every individual had a new and different language. This would certainly have led, not to the dispersion, but to the destruction, of mankind. Again, we are informed, that this separation took place, not only according to the languages which had then been supernaturally induced, but also, and principally, according to their families. The rational and obvious inference from the whole account would therefore be, that the diversity of language was coincident with the division of tribes and families, and that therefore the separation was a natural and ordinary one, and just such as Divine Wisdom had previously marked out and enjoined upon mankind.

It is one of the most interesting and important results of historical and lingual investigation which the world has ever seen, that this common-sense interpretation of the Mosaic narrative is confirmed by a series of unquestioned facts.

We refer to the celebrated investigations of Sir William Jones, a man, perhaps, more eminently qualified for such an undertaking than any other that ever lived. With an indomitable ardour in the pursuit of learning, a deep reverence for scripture truth, a most extensive acquaintance with numerous ancient and modern languages, and a thorough knowledge of history, especially that of Asia, this great man was at once prepared to pursue his inquiry in the most efficient manner, and to invest his conclusions with an authority which could scarcely attach to the opinions of any man less eminent.

The prominent results to which we have referred are these:—First, that the various languages of the world are traceable to three primitive ones; that these are essentially different in their construction from each other; but that all the languages of Asia and of the world finally resolve themselves into these. Secondly, that the several nations of



mankind are in a similar manner found to have descended from three distinct races or families. And, thirdly, that there is ample reason for believing that those several tribes of mankind, and those several primitive languages, are clearly traced to, and are found to have emanated from, ancient Iran,—an important district of which is geographically the same as that described in the scriptures as the plains of Shinar.

We give a brief abstract of our author's argument.

With respect to languages : We are told that the primitive tongues may be called the Sanscrit, the Arabic, and the Slavonic, or Tartarian.

1. The Sanscrit has produced the Greek, the Latin, the Gothic, the Celtic, though blended with another idiom, the Persian,\* the Armenian,† the old Egyptian, or Ethiopic.‡

2. From the Arabic, which is radically and essentially different from the Sanscrit, spring the dialects used by the Jews, the Arabs, the Assyrians, the people who spoke Syriac, and a numerous tribe of Abyssinians. §

3. The Slavonic, or Tartarian, is the parent of the various dialects of northern Asia, and north-eastern Europe ; and is radically different from the Sanscrit and the Arabic.

Having elicited these important positions, Sir William proceeds to show that these several languages are essentially distinct ; and declares, “ After a diligent search, I cannot find a single word used in common by Arabian, Indian, and Tartar families, before the intermixture of dialects occasioned by Mahomedan conquests ; ”—and all these languages are found to have existed together in a most remarkable manner in ancient Iran, (the scriptural Shinar,) affording reason for believing that persons speaking them severally, inhabited that locality at a former period.

With respect to the different nations, our author has, “ by a retrospective investigation, built on the soundest principles, found, that all Asia, and therefore the world, must have been peopled by three grand aboriginal races.

\* SIR WILLIAM JONES'S Works, (13 vols. 8vo.) vol. iii. p. 34.

† *Ibid.* p. 178.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 186.

§ *Ibid.* pp. 53, 186.



These, for the sake of convenience, he is willing to denominate Hindoos, Arabs, and Tartars; and to one or other of them, if we mount upwards, he shows that all nations must ultimately be referred."

These three races Sir William Jones believes to have occupied severally great districts in Asia, to which (although in a very large sense) he has applied the names of India, Arabia, and Tartary; and by emigrations from these he considers the whole world to have been peopled.

We shall not here detail the various subdivisions of these families, as given by our author. In some of the particulars his positions have been controverted, and in some points he may have been mistaken. In a range of inquiry, stretching over the entire world of mankind, and extending to the whole of the postdiluvian ages, it would be superhuman to exhibit universal accuracy. But these errors (if they be errors) do not affect the main argument, which has never been assailed with any show of reason or success; namely, that three separate families, speaking three distinct languages, did in remote antiquity emigrate from ancient Iran, and finally people the whole world.

Let it not be supposed that we rely on the lustre of a great name for the important conclusions given above. Perhaps no historical investigation was ever conducted with more deliberate caution, or ever came to us recommended by greater claims to our attention. Sir William Jones delivered his discourse on the Hindus on the 2d of February, 1786; and his elaborate and patient inquiries were continued through six consecutive years, the last discourse, on the origin and families of nations, having been read on the 23d of February, 1792. If any thing could enhance the value of these inquiries, it is the truly candid and philosophic spirit in which they were conducted. Let the reader peruse the author's own account of his labours, and their results: "We cannot, surely, deem it an inconsiderable advantage, that all our historical researches have confirmed the Mosaic accounts of the primitive world; and our testimony on that subject ought to have the greater weight,



because, if the result had been totally different, we should nevertheless have published them, not indeed with equal pleasure, but with equal confidence; for *truth is mighty*, and, whatever be its consequences, *must always prevail*! But, independently of our interest in corroborating the multiplied evidences of revealed religion, we could scarce gratify our minds with a more useful and rational entertainment, than the contemplation of these wonderful revolutions in kingdoms and states, which have happened within little more than four thousand years; revolutions almost as demonstrative of an all-ruling Providence, as the structure of the universe; and the final causes which are discernible in its whole extent, and even in its minutest parts. Figure to yourselves a moving picture of that eventful period, or rather a succession of crowded scenes rapidly changed. Three families migrate in different courses from one region, and in about four centuries establish very distant governments, and various modes of society: Egyptians, Indians, Goths, Phenicians, Celts, Greeks, Latians, Chinese, Peruvians, Mexicans, all sprung from the same immediate stem, appear to start nearly at one time, and occupy at length those countries to which they have given, or from which they have derived, their names: in twelve or thirteen hundred years more, the Greeks overrun the land of their forefathers, invade India, conquer Egypt, and aim at universal dominion; but the Romans appropriate to themselves the whole empire of Greece, and carry their arms into Britain, of which they speak with haughty contempt: the Goths, in the fulness of time, break to pieces the unwieldy Colossus of Roman power, and seize on the whole of Britain, except its wild mountains; but even those wilds become subject to other invaders of the same Gothic lineage: during all those transactions, the Arabs possess both coasts of the Red Sea, subdue the old seat of their first progenitors, and extend their conquests on one side, through Afric, into Europe itself; on another, beyond the borders of India, part of which they annex to their flourishing empire: in the same interval the Tartars, widely diffused over the rest of the



globe, swarm in the north-east, whence they rush to complete the reduction of Constantine's beautiful domains, to subjugate China, to raise in these Indian realms a dynasty splendid and powerful, and to ravage, like the two other families, the devoted regions of Iran: by this time the Mexicans and Peruvians, with many races of adventurers variously intermixed, have peopled the continent and isles of America, which the Spaniards, having restored their old government in Europe, discover and, in part, overcome: but a colony from Britain, of which Cicero ignorantly declared that it contained nothing valuable, obtain possession, and finally the sovereign dominion, of extensive American districts; whilst other British subjects acquire a subordinate empire in the finest provinces of India, which the victorious troops of Alexander were unwilling to attack." \*

We have inserted this extract on account of the vivid picture which it presents of the various political mutations that have occurred in the history of the world, and the consequent difficulty of now tracing the progress of the changes which have taken place in all the nations and languages of the earth. In such circumstances, it is remarkable that a confirmation of the Mosaic narrative so full and accurate as that presented to us by Sir William Jones, and obtained solely from abstract and independent evidence, should by any possibility have been procured.

But we have not only the evidence arising out of the peculiarity of language, and which is derived in common from all nations: the circumstances of one of the most ancient and most cultivated people of the world present a very remarkable proof of the veracity of scripture, and of the propriety of the line of interpretation which we have seen it our duty to adopt.

No nation has been more justly celebrated for learning and cultivation, in the annals of the world, than ancient Egypt. Yet, when the language and hieroglyphical characters of this people are philosophically investigated, instead

\* SIR WILLIAM JONES'S "Discourse on Asiatic History," Works, vol. iii. p. 210. 8vo. edition.



of leading to sceptical views, as has been sometimes imagined, they afford a remarkable confirmation of the Mosaic narrative.

“The unhappy sons of Misraim, the son of Ham, appear to have wandered forth from their habitations, disabled from any longer articulating the sounds of that which from the first had been the language of the whole human race; and also had erased from their memories all recollection of the meaning of that language.

“Diodorus Siculus and Plutarch were informed by the Egyptian priests, that, when the twice-great Thoth first came among mankind, they were not able to speak, but only uttered cries like brute animals: and, however lightly we may be inclined to value such traditions, it is perhaps not assuming too much to say, that generally they are not without some foundation in fact. Now, let the very peculiar structure of the language of ancient Egypt be taken into consideration. It appears that the language and the writings have formed and modified each other; the writing as often assisting the language, as the language the writing. It is a writing of pictures, expressing the ideas of a language of pictures. The roots of this language prove to be, according to the tradition, literally the cries of animals: every thing, as far as possible, being named from the sound produced by it. The verbs and adjectives were, many of them, (probably all, for the subject is still under investigation,) the names of objects, animate or inanimate, suggesting the peculiarities of their appearance and habits; as a camelopard, to be long, to extend; a wolf, to be cunning; a scarlet ibis, to be red. To this extent all was picture in the language, as well as in the writing. It also consists of comparatively a small number of sounds; the same sound expressing many different ideas; probably because different qualities of the same animal were thus variously employed. So that it seems scarcely possible to arrive at any other conclusion than that the language and writing arose together.

“But we have observed the same intimate union between



the writing and the idolatrous system of this singular people, and shown the probability, we might perhaps say certainty, that it also was invented together with the writing, and therefore with the language. Yet are all the three, as we have seen, systems of great intricacy and refinement. These are also facts, resulting from the recent researches into the antiquities of Egypt. And how, we ask again, are these strange anomalies to be reconciled? A generation of men highly cultivated, possessed of great mental powers, yet without religion, writing, or even language! It is contrary to all experience, that a civilized state of society should exist without religion: it is equally opposed to all analogy to assume that men may be civilized without writing; but without language civilization is clearly impossible. There are traces, nevertheless, of much thought and reflection in the construction of the language, writing, and religion of ancient Egypt; and the three appear to have arisen together. Its inventors, therefore, must have acquired the mental culture which enabled them to construct those systems by the help of some other language, at any rate. How came they, then, to lose this language? We leave to those who deny or lightly esteem the revelation of God, the suggestion of any theory they can devise whereby to answer the question. Those who reason rightly upon it, who follow the process of close induction by which the mode of reading hieroglyphics was discovered, will scarcely fail to perceive the conclusive and satisfactory nature of the answer which is afforded by that revelation. The language of the first settlers in Egypt had been miraculously confounded, and in that melancholy condition they had to frame for themselves a new language and system of writing." \*

Thus, then, does the history of mankind, when fairly and fully investigated, corroborate and explain the teaching of holy scripture. All the circumstances concur in showing, that as the rebellion under Nimrod consisted in a union of the three great branches of the Noachic family, and a

\* "The Antiquities of Egypt," p. 174.



determination to reside at Shinar; so Almighty God, determined to frustrate their purpose, secured their separation by confounding their language. And all the details of the case make it probable that this was effected by giving at least to two of these tribes an entirely new language, and perhaps at the same time creating several dialects of these parent tongues, which not only constrained them to divide the population into three grand bodies, but also, in process of time, induced further and extensive subdivisions.

A mighty manifestation of the power of God, a standing miracle attesting the verity of revealed truth, is clearly presented to us in this multiplication of tongues. We have, however, specially to regard it as accomplishing the Divine purpose. "They left off to build the city." (Gen. xi. 8.) Their purpose was abandoned. The idea of a universal government, and of enforcing one intolerant creed, was given up; and, although Nimrod and some of his adherents remained on the spot, and succeeded in raising a city and establishing a kingdom, yet his original purpose had been completely frustrated, the multitudes had departed; for, God having confounded their language, they were scattered abroad from thence upon the face of the whole earth.

It only remains for us to present a rapid sketch of the Dispersion; as it refers especially to the different countries occupied by the several tribes which journeyed from Babel.

The posterity of Shem appears to have occupied Southern Asia.

Elam, his eldest son, settled in Persia: the locality is determined by Daniel, who informs us that Shushan, or the chief city of Susiana, was situated in this country. (Dan. viii. 2.) Hence we find the Persians generally called Elamites in the scriptures.

Ashur, the second son of Shem, occupied the land which the Bible, from his name, calls Assyria. Moses informs us that this patriarch built Nineveh, Rehoboth, Calah, and Resin, soon after the first occupation of the country. We have already stated, that Bishop Patrick, Sir William



Drummond, and several other writers, adopting the marginal translation of Gen. x. 11, 12, contend that Nimrod went out into the land of Asshur, and, having subdued it, founded these cities. Than this, no position appears more improbable, or opposed to a greater weight of evidence. Nimrod was only one generation younger than Asshur, and both (even if Asshur himself was alive) were old men at the time of the Dispersion. How, then, if Asshur did not occupy this country, could it have been called after his name? And if he did, is it not reasonable that he who first occupied the country founded its most ancient and important cities? But the prophet Micah is cited as an authority; and Sir William Drummond says expressly, that this "prophet calls Assyria the land of Nimrod." Now the text referred to says, "They shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof." (Micah v. 6.) It is astonishing that respectable authors can give such evidence as this! Instead of calling the land of Assyria "the land of Nimrod," the prophet simply points out two contiguous countries, and threatens both with the same calamity.

The third son of Shem was Arphaxad. We read nothing of his personally taking possession of any country. It is probable that he remained in Chaldea; for here, in after-times, we find his descendant Abraham. All the information we possess respecting the posterity of Shem, is mostly confined to the line of descent through Cainan and Salah to Eber, whose family was separated into two branches, in Peleg and Joktan. The first of these was the ancestor of Abraham: of his other descendants we have scarcely any information.

Respecting the sons of Joktan, it is said, "Their dwelling was from Mesha, as thou goest, unto Sephar a mount of the east." (Gen. x. 30.) Josephus adds, "These inhabited from Cophen, an Indian river, and in part of Asia adjoining to it." \* Mr. Faber, on this point, observes, "I am inclined to believe that they were the ancestors of the great

\* *Antiq. Jud.* lib. i. cap. vi. sect. 4.



body of the Hindoos. To this opinion I am the more inclined, from finding among the Hindoos very vivid traditions, even by name, of the patriarch Shem, or Sama, or Sharma. They describe him as a being of a most benevolent disposition, but of a weak constitution ; they speak of him as travelling (that is to say, by his descendants) into their country ; and they represent him as instructing all the four principal castes in their religious duties. He is likewise supposed to be one of the many incarnations of Buddha : and this, I think, will account for the mild and philosophical character with which that god is invested by the Hindoos ; while the more warlike Goths exhibit him as the ferocious, though literary, deity of war. Ophir, one of the sons of Joktan, is often mentioned in scripture as inhabiting a land abounding in gold, to which voyages were made by ships that sailed from the Red Sea. Now Moses tells us that Ophir, in common with the other sons of Joktan, settled far to the east. The voyages, therefore, from the Red Sea to the land of Ophir must have been in an eastern direction. But the whole sea-coast of Persia, as far as the Indus, was inhabited by Cush mingled with Elam. Hence it will necessarily follow, that the land of Ophir must have been beyond the Indus. And this will bring us to the great peninsula of Hindostan, for the seat of Ophir and his brethren : to which, accordingly, we find that regular voyages have in the earliest times been made from the mouth of the Red Sea across the Indian Ocean.”\*

Notwithstanding the plausibility of this reasoning, we feel satisfied that the Arabians are descended from the sons of Joktan. Whether the posterity of this patriarch also extended to India, we will not decide ; the preceding evidence makes it probable, and the very early intercourse which subsisted between the two nations strengthens the supposition ; but all antiquity teaches that the ancient Arabians descended from Joktan.

Of the descendants or settlements of Lud the scriptures

\* FABER’S “Origin of Pagan Idolatry,” vol. iii. p. 453.



give us scarcely any information : we are therefore in great uncertainty respecting the land which he colonized. Josephus and Bochart agree in deriving the Lydians from this patriarch ; an opinion supported by an ancient tradition which attributes the origin of this people to Lydus or Lud.

Aram occupied the fertile country north of Babylonia, which lies between the Euphrates and the Tigris : whence, by the Greeks, it was called Mesopotamia, and, by the sacred writers, "Aram of the rivers." Afterwards, though largely mingled with other adventurers of the great Iranian empire, they spread themselves over the whole of Syria beyond Damascus.\*

We have now to trace the possessions of the tribe of Ham. At first the Divine purpose with regard to this family was resisted. The children of Cush, under the conduct of Nimrod, even after the confusion of languages, remained in Shinar, and from thence dispersed themselves abroad, mingling with, subduing, and governing numerous bodies of the descendants of Shem. In this way they founded the primitive empire of Iran, and gave the name of their father to an important district on the east bank of the Tigris. But it is remarkable that, wherever we find these Cushites or Cushim, they are evidently the ruling and priestly caste ; an additional proof that we have not mistaken the true character of Nimrod's assumption and polity.

The other branches of this family appear to have moved off, to occupy their destined territories in western Europe and Africa ; if, indeed, the latter was not also an encroachment on the appointed heritage of Shem. Canaan, the younger son of Ham, seems to have broken off from the main body of his tribe, and to have taken possession of Palestine, where his numerous children settled, and produced as many separate tribes and governments. The remaining portion of the family of Ham still travelled onward, until Mizraim occupied Egypt, which has always been known by

\* FABER'S "Origin of Pagan Idolatry," vol. iii. p. 453.



this name ; while Phut proceeded farther, and took up his residence on the western frontier of Egypt, thus providing a population for Africa. The progress of this journeying seems to be obscurely indicated by Moses, who informs us that Hebron, one of the most ancient cities of Canaan, was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt. (Num. xiii. 22.)

The allocation of the children of Japheth is now to be ascertained. There can be no doubt that they spread themselves over the entire northern regions of Asia, and the whole of Europe, and perhaps, by the easy passage across Behring's Straits, through America also. Of this tribe we have,—

1. *Gomer*.—This patriarch appears to have been the father of those who were originally called Gomerians ; and who, with a slight variation, retained their primeval title, as Comarians, Cimmerians, Cimbri, Cymry, Cumbri, Cambri, and Umbri ; but who, in lapse of years, bore the superadded name of Celts, Gauls, Galatæ, and Gaels. These, spreading themselves from the regions north of Armenia and Bactriana, where we find some remains of them so late as the time of Ezekiel, extended themselves over nearly the whole of the continent of Europe, and first planted the two great isles of Britain and Ireland.

2. *Magog*, *Tubal*, and *Mesech* had their residence far north of India. This fact is expressly taught by Ezekiel. (Chap. xxxviii. 2, 15.) And there, accordingly, we may still trace them, as the ancestors of the great Slavonic or Sarmatian house, and of the scarcely less extensive Tartar family. The name of Magog still exists in the national appellations of Mogli, and Monguls, and Mongogians ; while those of Tubal and Mesech are preserved in Tobolski, and Moschici, and Moscow, and Muscovite.

3. *Madai* was the parent of the Medes. Whenever the sacred writers speak of this people, they designate them by the same appellation that Moses gives to the son of Japheth.

4. From "*Javan* were descended the aboriginal Javanites, or Iaones, or Yavanas ; by which names the inhabitants of Greece have invariably been called by the oriental nations,



and sometimes even by themselves. With respect to the sons of Javan, we seem to recognise Elishah in Elis, Tarshish in Tartessus or Tarsus, Kittim in the Macedonian Cittum, and Dodanim in Dodona." \*

5. *Tiras* appears to have been the progenitor of the aboriginal Thracians. Their kings not unfrequently bore the name of Tereus.

There is no part of the history of the world which is calculated to make a deeper impression on the mind of a reflecting Christian than this. Here scepticism has exerted its utmost power, has invoked the aid of every dark and evil energy. Facts have been distorted and misrepresented, all authentic chronology has been set at defiance, and names, events, and even national history, have been perverted and confounded; while the effect of Jewish vitiation of holy scripture has pressed into the compass of three centuries the events of a thousand years. All these influences, combined, have stood in formidable array against any common-sense interpretation of the history which Moses, by Divine inspiration, has handed down to us. Yet, when we labour through this mass of error and evil intention, and persevere in comparing the testimony of scripture with the real state of the world, and the true history of man, we find that it stands out in all the light and power of simple and perfect truth.

Leaving every historical difficulty of the period to the care of the errors that have created them, the sacred narrative, according to the correct chronology of the Septuagint, exhibits the family of Noah as residing and multiplying in the neighbourhood of Ararat in Armenia, where the ark rested, and which was in the geographical vicinity of Paradise. Here the holy patriarch offered his acceptable sacrifice, superintended his family, and ultimately died. His posterity, greatly multiplying, and impelled by a Divine command to separate, leave Armenia in a body, and, following the course of the Euphrates, arrive at Shinar. Here,

\* FABER'S "Origin of Pagan Idolatry," vol. iii. p. 451. We have been greatly indebted to this invaluable work in our investigations.



by the suasive arts of Nimrod, supported by the paramount influence of the tribe of Ham, they are induced to remain a united people, and to establish a universal sovereignty, and a uniform scheme of religion. Heaven beheld and frowned on this impious purpose. Jehovah came down, and miraculously confounded their speech !

This was effected by giving to each tribe a totally different language. By this means their separation was rendered inevitable. Intelligible speech, the great essential element of social intercourse, being broken up, they could no longer act in concert ; consequently, the great majority of families moved off to their respective destinations ; while Nimrod and his adherents, true to the meaning of his name, continuing to rebel, remained at Babel, and there established a kingdom.

These events are in brief outline recorded in holy scripture, and are attested by its Divine authority. And if men had to rely on this truth, sustained as it is by a thousand prophecies and miracles, they ought to submit and believe. But no historical facts relating to a remote period are so well attested as these. The true philosophy of language—not that which, like the reveries of ancient explorers of nature, first starts with a ridiculous and often contemptible theory, and bends every thing into a false position in order to support it ; but the philosophy of language, as investigated by a close and careful series of induction from existing facts—confirms the entire scripture account ; they mutually explain and prove each other : while authentic history and ancient tradition, sought out and honestly elicited from the archives and literary remains of ancient nations, unite to show, that no theory of the origin and progress of the primitive nations, that does not establish the truth of the Mosaic narrative, can be for a moment entitled to credit.

When a mind, deeply impressed with the sacred character of revealed truth, fully investigates this subject, it is difficult to say whether indignation at the captious, sceptical, and unjust misrepresentations which have been propounded, or



admiration of the unexpected and abundant confirmation of the Bible which the history of the period supplies, predominates. We are free to confess, that, although volumes would be required for the minute investigation of every interesting point, and for meeting every apparent difficulty which this subject presents to our attention ; yet, in our judgment, after a careful and patient inquiry, nothing can be more explicit and triumphant than the confirmation which ancient history gives to the biblical account of this period, when explained according to the chronology of the Septuagint.



## CHAPTER VIII.

THE HISTORY OF THE SCRIPTURE PATRIARCHS, FROM  
THE DISPERSION TO THE DEATH OF ISAAC.

JOB, the same with Jobab the Son of Joktan—His History investigated, and his Place of Residence, the Period when he lived, the civilized Condition of Mankind in his Time—SERUG—NAHOR—TERAH—ABRAHAM—His History and Travels—LOT—The Vicissitudes to which he was exposed after leaving Abraham—ISHMAEL—Traditions respecting him—ISAAC—His Birth, intended Sacrifice, and Conduct to his Sons.

IN prosecuting our investigations into the history of this period, it will be desirable, in the first instance, to supply a consecutive outline of the biography and character of the several patriarchs who then flourished; after which we may make some general observations, calculated to cast light upon the history of the age.

In proceeding downward from the time of Peleg, according to the chronological arrangement which we have adopted, the first patriarch presented to our attention in holy scripture is JOB.

We consider it more than probable that the justly-celebrated patriarch whose case is exhibited in the book which bears his name, is the same person with Jobab, the son of Joktan. Now, as Peleg and Joktan were brothers, both being the sons of Eber, Jobab or Job stands in the generation immediately following the Dispersion. If this conjecture shall prove to be well-founded, then this inspired book may be regarded as most opportunely supplying us with an authentic account of the religion of those patriarchs who remained faithful to God, prior to those further revelations and promises which were made to Abraham.

We are aware of the various opinions which great men, possessing the highest qualifications, have promulged on



this subject; and we therefore expect that what we may advance, if received at all, will be subjected to a severe critical ordeal. As our only object is to elicit truth, we do not shrink from such a test.

Still, perhaps no subject can present a more forbidding aspect to an inquiring mind than does the history of Job, notwithstanding the peculiar interest with which it is invested. Every thing relating to this patriarch has been violently controverted. His country, the age in which he lived, the author of the book that bears his name, have all been fruitful themes of discord: and, as if to confound confusion, these disputes are interrupted by others, who would maintain that no such person ever existed; that the whole tale is a poetic fiction, an allegory!

We are not called upon to enter into these various controversies, or to attempt an answer to all the objections that have been urged against the general teaching of scripture on this head. Yet we cannot, in such circumstances, treat the case as if such disputes had never been raised. The subject has become involved and intricate, not so much on account of any native obscurity, as through the conflicting opinions which learned men have propounded respecting the personality, era, and character of Job.

It will be our endeavour to show, as clearly as the nature of the case will admit, when Job lived; where he resided; what were the circumstances in which he was placed; and the character which he sustained.

Before we enter upon this inquiry, it will be necessary to observe, that this subject has been greatly obscured by confounding together the actions and circumstances of different individuals, living in different ages, on account of their sustaining the same name. That excellent author, and eminently learned scholar, Dr. Samuel Lee, has furnished a most remarkable instance of this kind of error. He makes Sheba, the grandson of Cush, to be the same with Sheba, the grandson of Abraham; while Uz, the son of Aram, is in like manner identified with Uz, the son of Nahor.\* It is

\* DR. LEE'S "Introduction to the Book of Job," sect. 3.



by such anachronisms that the history has been so greatly obscured.

The following table of the repetition of the names, more or less connected with the portion of history now under consideration, will serve to illustrate this point.

Job, the subject of the book bearing his name.

Jobab, the son of Joktan. (Gen. x. 29.)

Jobab, the son of Zerah. (Gen. xxxvi. 33.)

Job, the son of Issachar. (Gen. xlvi. 13.)

Jobab, the king of Madon. (Joshua xi. 1.)

Jobab, the son of Shaharaim. (1 Chron. viii. 9.)

Jobab, the son of Elpaal. (1 Chron. viii. 18.)

Uz, the son of Aram. (Gen. x. 23.) Huz in the printed Samaritan text.\*

Huz, the son of Nahor. Heb. הז (Gen. xxii. 21 ;) which should have been rendered Uz.†

Uz, the son of Dishan. (Gen. xxxvi. 28.)

Sheba, the son of Joktan. (Gen. x. 28.)

Sheba and Dedan, sons of Raamah. (Gen. x. 7.)

Sheba and Dedan, sons of Jokshan. (Gen. xxv. 3.)

Sheba, the son of Abihail. (1 Chron. v. 13.)

Aram, the son of Shem. (Gen. x. 22.)

Aram, the son of Kemuel. (Gen. xxii. 21.)

Aram, the son of Esrom. (Matt. i. 3 ; Luke iii. 33.) ‡

This list might be greatly extended ; but in its present form it is sufficient to show that, in those ancient times, the same names were frequently appropriated to different individuals, who in their turn gave their own names to the several districts of country which they occupied. Nothing, therefore, can be more fallacious than to decide that Edom was the residence of Job, because it was called the land of Uz. We see by the preceding list that a grandson of Esau bore this appellation, who might have had sufficient influence to give his own name to a large district of the country occupied by the descendants of Edom, although the country of Uz where Job dwelt might be quite another

\* BURRINGTON'S "Genealogies," vol. i. p. 15.

† *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 38.

‡ *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 186.



land, named from the son of Aram. It is equally unsafe to conclude, because in the family of Esau we meet with Buz and Teman, and Shuha, as descendants of Abraham by Keturah, that therefore Elihu the Buzite, Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, the friends of Job, were the descendants of these men. There are other, and much more important, elements in the inquiry; and if these should place the scene of the transactions of this book in the neighbourhood where these persons settled, and in an age subsequent to that in which they lived, then the conclusion alluded to would appear very probable; but if the contrary should be established by sufficient evidence, we must not be led away from the truth by a similarity of names.

There is one peculiarity of considerable importance, which attaches to historical investigations into the events of the age from the Deluge to Isaac: the duration of the life of man so greatly and gradually diminished during this period, that, if we can clearly ascertain the length of a person's life, it is not difficult to point out the most probable time in which he lived. Let us apply this test to the case of the pious patriarch who is the subject of this investigation.

We are in no part of holy scripture distinctly told what was the exact length of Job's life; but we have such information as will enable us to come to a tolerably satisfactory judgment on this head.

We are informed that, "after this," (his trial and affliction,) "Job lived an hundred and forty years." (Chap. xlii. 16.) Before this time he had a family of children grown up, and probably married, seeing they had separate establishments of their own; for, when the day of trial came, "his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house." (Chap. i. 13.) If we take the lowest account found in any copies of holy scripture, we find, according to the Hebrew, that no patriarch in a direct line from Shem to Nahor was a parent before the age of thirty. Supposing Job to have married at this age, and his eldest son to have done the same, he



would then have been sixty when his troubles began ; and, consequently, his whole age, at this very lowest computation, would be two hundred years. But as it appears that all Job's children had left their father's house when his trial began, the probability is, that the youngest was thirty at this period, instead of the eldest, as we have supposed, which would add ten or twenty years more to the age of the patriarch. This calculation, being based on the Hebrew number, places the era of Job, according to that version, between the time of Peleg and that of Abraham. Peleg lived two hundred and thirty-nine years ; Reu, two hundred and thirty-nine ; Serug, two hundred and thirty ; Nahor, one hundred and forty-eight ; Terah, two hundred and five ; after which the term of human life was gradually, but rapidly, diminished.

We have, however, assigned reasons for preferring the chronology of the Septuagint. And if, guided by their numbers, we pursue a similar course of investigation, we may say that Job married when about one hundred and thirty ; that his eldest son was about one hundred and thirty at the time of his affliction ; which, with the one hundred and forty years afterwards, would make the whole duration of his life four hundred years. This, according to the Septuagint, would place the era of Job's life between Cainan and Nahor ; for the first-named of these patriarchs lived four hundred and sixty years ; Salah, four hundred and thirty-three ; Eber, four hundred and four ; Peleg, three hundred and thirty-nine ; Reu, three hundred and thirty-nine ; Serug, three hundred and thirty ; Nahor, two hundred and eight. This estimate appears to be a very near approximation to the truth.

We have a remarkable confirmation of this chronological point supplied by the application of astronomical science to the circumstances noticed in the Book of Job. "The cardinal constellations of spring and autumn, in Job's time, were *Chima* and *Chesil*, or *Taurus* and *Scorpio* ; noticed chap. ix. 9 ; and again, xxxviii. 31, 32 ; of which, the principal stars are Aldebaran, the Bull's Eye, and Antare, the



Scorpion's Heart. Knowing, therefore, the longitudes of these stars at present, the interval of time from thence to the assumed date of Job's trial will give the difference of these longitudes, and ascertain their positions then, with respect to the vernal and equinoctial points of intersection of the equinoctial and ecliptic; according to the usual rate of the precession of the equinoxes, one degree in seventy-one years and a half." \*

A careful calculation, based on these principles, has proved that Taurus was the cardinal constellation of spring in the year B.C. 2338; and also that Scorpio was the cardinal constellation of autumn at that period. It is curious that these calculations were made independently by English and French astronomers, and with the same result.† Although this kind of proof is not relied upon as fixing the precise year of Job's trial, it seems to point out the time when he lived with sufficient accuracy for our purpose.

It is also worthy of attention that Dr. Hales, by fixing the time of Job's trial B.C. 2338, or 2337, places it just in the middle of the life of Reu, according to the numbers of the Septuagint; and on inspecting our genealogical table of the postdiluvian patriarchs, it will be found that Reu stands in the same contemporaneous generation as Jobab the son of Joktan; and this is the precise period to which we were led as the probable time of Job's life, by a careful consideration of the number of years which this patriarch lived. Such concurring evidence, to say the least, renders it very probable that Jobab the son of Joktan, and the first of this name on record, was the Job whose history is now under investigation, and the subject of the inspired book which bears his name.

There are other reasons which may be given as corroborating this conclusion, and illustrating the life and times of the patriarch.

We first notice the name Job, or Jobab. It has been supposed that these names were originally the same; but,

\* HALE'S "Analysis of Chronology," vol. ii. p. 55.    † *Ibid.* p. 56.



however this may be, an appendix to the Septuagint version of this book states, that "this man is described in the Syriac book as living in the land of Ausis, on the borders of Idumea and Arabia: and his name before was Jobab." Whatever authority this apocryphal addition to the Greek version may be allowed to have, it sufficiently proves that writers familiar with the language and idioms of the east regarded the names as identically the same, or as merging into each other.

Another kind of evidence may be referred to, as confirmatory of the opinion that Job lived in this early era. It is a fact established by history, as far as there are any records on the subject, that at the time of Moses every tribe or nation then upon earth, except the Israelites, had lapsed into idolatry. Enlightened individuals, guided by the teaching of primeval tradition, might indeed still have continued to worship the one true God, while the nations in which they lived were confirmed in idolatrous practices. The Babylonians, Chaldeans, Egyptians, Canaanites, Midianites, Ethiopians of Abyssinia, Syrians, and other contemporary nations, had all sunk into gross idolatry, long before the time of Moses. A careful review of this subject has led an excellent writer to observe, "Now, I may ask, whether, in the idolatrous state of the world, as just set forth, there could have been found five such persons, (as Job and his friends,) all believers in God in the land of Uz in the time of Moses, seeing that the five were not persons selected from all the inhabitants of the land for their religion, but that they were suddenly and accidentally brought together by reason of the illness of Job? I think it would have been impossible. But this is not all. Not only were these men believers in the one true God, and free from idolatry themselves; they lived in a country where idolatry was punished by the law of the land: this is plain from chap. xxxi. 26—28."

Another circumstance worthy of attention is the fact, that, when idolatry is noticed at all, it is described as the worship of the heavenly bodies: "If I beheld the sun when it



shined, or the moon walking in brightness ; and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand." (Job xxxi. 26, 27.) Now, it is well known that this primitive form of idolatry had been superseded long before the time of Moses : the injunction of the Decalogue is sufficient proof of this. The command is not directed so much against this practice, but runs thus : "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image," &c. (Exod. xx. 4.) The worship of the sun and moon was indeed prohibited, and commanded to be punished with death ; but the prevailing form of idolatry at that time was image-worship. All this unites with other evidence to show, that Job must have lived long before Moses, and even before Abraham.

It appears, therefore, from a careful review of the whole subject, that the era of Job must be placed between the time of Peleg and that of Abraham. Even the chronology of the Hebrew scriptures requires this admission. But the more correct numbers of the Septuagint define the time of this patriarch with greater accuracy, and fix it at about B.C. 2650 to 2250. This, as has been shown, is the epocha fixed on by Dr. Hales ; it has been confirmed by astronomical calculations ; it falls within the life-time of the first person called Jobab, who is named in the scriptures ; and it gives harmony to the whole subject, which, on any other principle, becomes distorted, and involved in great confusion.

There is not so large an amount of evidence to be examined respecting the land in which Job resided. On this, as on other points, learned authors have adopted different views ; but they are generally to be taken rather as matters of opinion than results sustained by satisfactory proof.

In the book itself we are told that Job lived "in the land of Uz ;" (Job i. 1 ;) and the question to be decided is, where this land was situated. We think there can be little doubt that this district, wherever it is to be found, was named after Uz, the son of Aram, and grandson of Shem. This person lived three generations before Jobab, the son of Joktan ; and if Jobab is the same person as Job, Uz the son of Aram might have given his name to a district



occupied by this branch of the family. Bochart, Spanheim, Heidegger, and others, have contended that this country lay in Sandy Arabia. Michaëlis and Jahn place it in the vale of Damascus. But perhaps, on the whole, the labours of Dr. Mason Good have given us a more consistent and probable solution of the difficulty than any of these. We give the substance of it in his own words: "The immediate district of Arabia, to which this poem directs our attention, is the land of Uz, which by some geographers has been placed in Sandy, and by others in Stony, Arabia. Bochart took a lead in the former opinion, and has been powerfully supported by Spanheim, and the writers of that very excellent work, the 'Universal History.' The general argument is as follows: Ptolemy has described a region, which he calls *Æsitæ*, as situated in this very province, bounded by the Cauchabeni, who inhabited the southern banks of the Euphrates, on the north, and by the mountains of Chaldea on the east: and as the Septuagint and the Greek writers generally translate Uz by *Αυσίτις*, (*Ausitis*,) there is a probability, it is contended, that the Ausitis or Ausitai of the poem of Job was the same as the *Æsitæ* of Ptolemy: a probability which is considerably strengthened by our finding, in Ptolemy's delineation of this same province, three districts denominated Sabe, Thema, and Busitis, very closely corresponding in sound with the Sabæa, Teman, and Buz of the same poem. In addition to which, we are expressly told, in the very opening of the poem, that the country was often infested by hordes of Chaldæan bandits, whose mountains form the boundary-line between the Ptolemaic *Æsitæ* and Chaldæa. In consequence of which, it is ingeniously conjectured that the land of Uz, and of Buz, the *Æsitæ* and Busitis of Ptolemy, were respectively peopled and named from Uz and Buz, two of the sons of Nahor, and consequently nephews of Abraham; the residence of whose father, Terah, was at Haran, or Charræ, on the opposite bank of the Euphrates, and necessarily therefore in the neighbourhood of *Æsitæ*.

"Yet this hypothesis can by no means be reconciled with



the geography of the Old Testament, which is uniform in placing the land of Uz, or the Ausitis of the Septuagint, in Stony Arabia, on the south-western coast of the Lake Asphaltites, or the Dead Sea, in a line between Egypt and Philistia; surrounded by Kedar, Teman, and Midian, all of them districts of Stony Arabia; and, as though to set every remaining doubt completely at rest, situated in Idumæa, or the land of Edom or Esau, (of whose position there can be no question,) and comprising so large a part of it, that Idumæa and Ausitis, or the land of Uz and the land of Edom, were convertible terms, and equally employed to import the same region. Thus Jeremiah, Lam. ii. 21 :—

‘ Rejoice, and be glad, O daughter of Edom,  
That dwellest in the land of Uz.’

Whence Eusebius: ‘ Idumæa is the region of Esau, surnamed Edom: it is that part which lies about Petra, (Stony Arabia,) now called Gabalene, and with some writers is the Ausitis or country of Job:’ an opinion advanced with great modesty, considering that he himself appears to have concurred in it.

“ Nothing, therefore, appears clearer, than that the Uz or Ausitis mentioned in the ensuing poem must have been situate in Stony and not in Sandy Arabia; and that the Æsitis of Ptolemy could not have been the same place. In reality, to make it so, Bochart, and those who advocate his opinion, are obliged to suppose, first, a typographical error of Æsitis for Ausitis in the text of Ptolemy; and next, that the position of Æsitis itself is not correctly laid down in Ptolemy’s delineation, which they admit ought to be placed in a higher northern latitude, by nearly two degrees. Uz, Buz, Teman, Dedan, and Seba, are names not unfrequent in the earlier part of the Hebrew scriptures; and hence it is by no means difficult to suppose, that, in different provinces of the same country, similar names may have been given to different districts or cities. And it is highly probable, that the Seba of Ptolemy was so denominated, not from the son of Abraham of this name by Keturah, but



from one of the descendants of Cush, who had a son of the name of Seba, and two grandsons named Sheba and Dedan, (Gen. x. 7,) and who in various places are incidentally stated to have travelled towards the eastern parts of Happy Arabia, and consequently in the very track in which the Seba of Ptolemy is situated; a probability very strongly corroborated from the name of Raamah, the father of Sheba and Dedan, being also mentioned by Ezekiel, (chap. xxvii.) as that of a celebrated commercial city lying in the same track; by the Septuagint written *Ῥέγμα* (*Rhegma*); and from the same name, with the Septuagint mode of spelling it, occurring in Ptolemy, at no great distance from his Seba.

“It only remains to be observed, that, allowing this chronography to be correct, there is no difficulty in conceiving that hordes of predatory Chaldæans, and even of the Sabæans of Ptolemy, should occasionally have infested the country of Idumæa, and carried off the camels of Job, unlimited as they were in their roving, and addicted to general plunder, perhaps, as Bishop Lowth conjectures, over the whole extent of country from the Euphrates to Egypt.”\*

It will serve to confirm this opinion, and show the probability of the view which we have taken of the whole subject, to state, that the Arabians, according to their own historians, “are sprung from two stocks,—Kahtan, the same with Joktan, the son of Eber, and Adnan, descended in a direct line from Ishmael, the son of Abraham by Hagar. The posterity of the former they call al Arab al Ariba, that is, the genuine or pure Arabs, and those of the latter al Arab al Mostáreba, that is, naturalized or insititious Arabs.”†

Thus we see that the father of Jobab or Job is to this day regarded as the founder of the great Arabic people, a circumstance which accounts for the residence of his son in the locality which we have assigned him, and also for the

\* DR. MASON GOOD'S “Introductory Dissertation” to his translation of the Book of Job.

† “Ancient Universal History,” vol. xvi. p. 267.



entirely Arabian character which the whole book so obviously possesses.

Much has been said about the state and dignity in which this patriarch is supposed to have lived ; and it has been strongly maintained that he was an independent sovereign. Both ancient and modern writers call Job a king. This notion appears to rest on some passages in the Septuagint and Vulgate, where it is said, that he who was once a king, now sat naked on a dunghill ; also on chap. iii. 13, 14, where Job says, that if he were dead, he might have reposed with kings and counsellors of the earth. They found it also on what is said of his wealth, and of his being the greatest man in the east ; (chap. i. ;) of the honours that were paid to him ; (chap. xxix. 7, 8 ;) of the diadem which he wore ; (verse 14 ;) of his liberality to the poor ; (verse 12 ;) of his authority being like that of a king in his army ; (verse 25 ;) also on the addition made by the Septuagint that his three friends were kings ; and on their being called such in the Book of Tobit.

But all this is either apocryphal or contrary to scripture, which represents Job and his friends as rich and powerful, but says not one word of their royalty, and speaks of them as private persons. Had it been otherwise, the narrative would have begun thus : “ There was a certain *king* in Idumea, whose name was Job ; ” since it would have added much more to the force of his example, had he been of royal condition ; and the scriptures are generally careful to mark such circumstances. As to his diadem, it was simply a tiara, or turban ; and as to his being buried with kings, he merely means, that, were he dead, he should be at rest as they are, and be no longer distressed with cares and anxieties. It is more than doubtful whether such an office as that of a king existed in the days of Job any where, especially in Arabia, a country never ruled at large by sovereigns, but always boasting its political freedom. Neither is Job represented as losing his kingdom, when he sustained his other losses ; nor does he appear to have possessed any army with which to pursue the predatory Chal-



deans ; no kind of allusion to any military force or sovereign authority is made ; and although his mistaken friends accuse him of various crimes, they never charge him with acting improperly toward his people. On the other hand, he does not appear to have been subject to any sovereign, nor to have owned allegiance to any superior but God. His being a patriarch, or the head of a numerous family, coupled with his extensive flocks and ample possessions, would constitute him a sort of emir, prince, or chief magistrate, in his district ; within which territory his decisions in a judicial capacity would be received with respect and submission ; but that is all.

As to the presents made to him after his recovery, which some have strangely supposed to have been a sort of tribute, or homage, what were they but the gifts of friendly gratulation, and intended to compensate for the property which he had lost ?

As to the passage in Tobit, besides its apocryphal character, it is not found in the original Greek, Hebrew, or Syriac of that book, but only in the Vulgate version ; and it consequently wants authenticity. And as to Job's friends, the narrative shows that they were no more than neighbours or relations, who came to condole with him. From all these considerations, it appears, that the account in the appendix to the Septuagint version of this book, which makes Job to be a king of the Edomites, is wholly in error.\*

If we have not wholly erred in our examination of the era of this patriarch, it will follow that the trial of Job took place about four hundred years after the Dispersion. This is shown thus : Joktan, the father of Job, was the brother, and, in all probability, the younger brother, of Peleg. But Peleg was one hundred and thirty years old at the birth of his eldest son. Supposing, therefore, that Job was one hundred and thirty at the birth of his first son, and that Job's son was one hundred and thirty when his father's trial began, we have three hundred and ninety years from the birth of Peleg to the time of Job's trial.

\* See WEMY'S "Job and his Times," p. 99.



This conclusion furnishes us with another and independent corroboration of the general accuracy of these views. We do not, indeed, now refer to this circumstance for the purpose of showing the period when Job lived: this, we think, the preceding evidence has established. But we do think that it supplies an incidental corroboration of this date.

From the Creation to the time of the Gospel dispensation, God was pleased to raise up a succession of holy and devoted men to bear witness to his truth, and to sustain by their character the cause of righteousness in the world.

In the antediluvian age, Abel led the van of this host of God's elect; and when he fell a martyr to his faith in God, Seth was "appointed as another seed instead of Abel." (Gen. iv. 25.) His piety is commemorated in all antiquity. Twenty years before his removal from this world, Enoch was born: he walked with God three hundred and sixty-five years, and was not; for God translated his faithful servant to heaven. Within little more than a century after his translation, Noah was born, who "was a just man and perfect in his generations," and "a preacher of righteousness." (Gen. vi. 9; 2 Peter ii. 5.)

But after the Flood, on any other hypothesis than that which we have adopted, we have from the death of Noah, (three hundred and fifty years after the Flood,) until the call of Abraham, a period of seven hundred and fifty years during which the world was unenlightened by the teaching, and uninfluenced by the example, of any pious man, whose name and character are noticed in holy writ. The sacred annals supply us with no similar night of darkness, from the Creation to the Advent of the Saviour, when life and immortality were brought to light by the Gospel.

But, upon the principle to which a careful survey of the preceding evidence has conducted us, we find Job raised up, a witness for the truth, in the midst of this period. Allowing him to be contemporary with Reu, he would have been born about two hundred and eighty years after the death of Noah, and have died about one hundred years before the



piety and character of Abraham could have had any influence on the world.

We think all those who have carefully studied the gracious dealings of God with the world, in the manifestation of his truth and the displays of his righteousness, will feel disposed to attach some importance to this point. It will be observed, that we do not put it forth as any proof of the time in which Job lived ; but that, the date being ascertained by sufficient evidence, we introduce this fact as showing that the time previously fixed upon harmonizes with the entire scope of God's gracious dealings with mankind throughout the Old-Testament economy.\*

At all events, it will be seen and acknowledged, that the opinions which we advocate raise the book of Job and its contents into what we feel disposed to term their just importance, as an essential part of the canon of holy scripture. Let it be admitted that Job was an Idumean Arab, living about the time of Moses, or that he lived at any subsequent period, the book may indeed, on such supposition, be regarded as teaching some beautiful and important lessons of morality and religion ; but a very large proportion of its contents will be utterly unmeaning, as to direct religious or historical teaching, and will have to be accounted for on the supposition that the piece was carefully planned out as an epic poem, or on some other such conventional principle. We are free to confess, whatever may be the consequences of this admission, that, in our judgment, all such expositions are utterly unworthy of being applied to the truth of God. We believe that the Spirit of inspiration has revealed nothing in vain ; that every thing bearing this hallowed impression is replete with important and highly useful truth. In the view which we have taken of the history, era, and character of Job, this is eminently the case :—This book exhibits, in a full and ample degree, a living picture of human life in the postdiluvian generations prior

\* Since writing the above, the author has seen that Mr. Townsend, in his "Chronological Arrangement," has adopted these views, and urged them with great force.



to the time of Abraham. Taken in this sense, it must be admitted that it casts a flood of light on an otherwise dark period of our world's history, and exhibits, with equal clearness, the religion, learning, science, and civil condition of mankind at that early age.

As we shall hereafter consider the religion and learning of that period, we only refer at present to the information which this part of scripture affords respecting the contemporaneous civil character and general condition of mankind.

In the manners and customs which are here described we have a vivid picture of human life, and one that is as opposed to the sceptical philosophy which has so extensively prevailed, as it is consistent with the dictates of common sense. Here we have nothing of barbarism. With all the simplicity of the age, we find a sterling and enlightened manliness characterizing the various usages of society. The slavish homage of prostration to princes and great men, which afterwards so generally obtained in the east, was at this period unknown; yet the absence of this was not accompanied with the absence of due respect for superiors. Job was "the greatest of all the men of the east;" (chap. i. 3;) he received nothing of this profane and foolish adoration: but the marks of respect manifested towards him are minutely described. "When the young men saw" him, they "hid themselves," through rustic bashfulness; "the aged arose, and stood up" in his presence; "*the princes refrained*" from "*talking, and laid their hand on their mouth; the nobles held their peace,*" and were all attention while he spoke. (Chap. xxix. 8—10.) All this was highly respectful, and bespoke a cultivated state of society; but it was manly, and showed no cringing or servile adulation.

Job acted as high priest in his own family; and, minute as are the descriptions of the different classes and usages of society in this book, we have not the slightest allusion to the existence of any priests or specially-appointed ministers of religion; a fact which shows the extreme antiquity of the period, as priests were in all probability first appointed about the time of Abraham, and became general soon after-



ward. For Melchizedek was a priest in the time of the father of the faithful; Joseph was married to the daughter of a priest in Egypt; and Moses, to the daughter of a priest in Midian.

Before we pass from this period, it will be necessary for us to refer more particularly to the information which we have respecting the personal character, sufferings, and conduct of Job, in the book which bears his name. The general scope and moral of this sublime production (namely, that the troubles and afflictions of a good man are, for the most part, designed as tests of his virtue and integrity, out of which he will at length emerge with additional splendour and happiness) are common to eastern poets, and not uncommon to those of Greece. But, in various respects, the poem of Job stands alone and unrivalled. In addition to every corporeal suffering and privation which it is possible for man to endure, it carries forward the trial in a manner and to an extent which has never been attempted elsewhere,—into the keenest faculties and sensations of the mind, and mixes the bitterest taunts and accusations of friendship with the agonies of family bereavement and despair. The body of other poems consists chiefly of incidents; that of the present, of colloquy or argument, in which the train of reasoning is so well sustained, its matter so important, its language so ornamented, the doctrines it develops so sublime, and its transition from passion to passion so abrupt, that the want of incident is not felt, and the attention is rivetted as by enchantment. In other poems the supernatural agency is fictitious, and often incongruous; in this it is supported in its grand outline by the concurrent testimony of every other part of scripture; an agency not obtrusively introduced, but demanded by the magnitude of the occasion; and as much more exalted and magnificent than any other kind of similar interference, as it is more veritable and solemn. The suffering hero is sublimely called forth to the performance of his part in the presence of men and angels; each becomes interested, and equally interested, in his conduct; the Almighty assents to



the trial, and for a season manifests no special aid; the malice of Satan is in its full career and activity; hell hopes, earth trembles, and every good spirit is in awful and anxious suspense. The wreck of his substance is in vain; the wreck of his family is in vain; the scalding sores of a corroding leprosy are in vain; the artillery of insults, reproaches, and railing, poured forth from the mouths of bosom friends, is in vain. Though at times thrown, in some degree, off his guard, the holy sufferer is never completely overpowered. He sustains the shock without yielding; he still holds fast his integrity. Thus terminates the trial of faith: Satan is confounded; fidelity triumphs; and the Almighty, with a magnificence worthy the occasion, unveils his resplendent tribunal, and crowns the afflicted champion with applause. The scope of this speech, says Bishop Stock, is to humble Job, and teach others, by his example, to acquiesce in the dispensations of God, from an unbounded confidence in his wisdom, equity, and goodness; an end worthy the interposition of the Deity. On the conclusion of the Almighty's address, Job humbles himself, acknowledges his ignorance, "repents as in dust and ashes," offers sacrifices for his friends, and is restored to double prosperity, comfort, and honour.\*

We have here two points calling for passing remark:—the intellectual character of Job and his friends, and the composition of the book which contains the account. Five individuals are presented to our attention; they engage in conversation on the most momentous subjects: they enter into it with the greatest possible earnestness and energy. In the course of this controversy, their remarks, descriptions, and allusions take the widest possible range;—the various arts, the most recondite sciences, the most remarkable productions of earth, in respect of animals, vegetables, and minerals, the classified arrangement of the stars of heaven, are all noticed; and, beyond all this, the debate rises high above earthly things: the way and will and pro-

\* CARPENTER'S "Biblical Companion," p. 150



vidential dealings of God are investigated. All this is done with the greatest propriety, with the most consummate skill; and, notwithstanding the expression of some erroneous opinions, all is under the influence of a devout and sanctified temper of mind.

Again: The narrative is given in poetry of the most sublime character. The literary excellence of the book may challenge comparison with any other extant. An eminent writer, who has not fully entered into these views, nevertheless remarks, "The antiquary, or the critic, who has been at the pains to trace the history of the Grecian drama, from its first weak and imperfect efforts, and has carefully observed its tardy progress to perfection, will scarcely, I think, without astonishment, contemplate a poem produced so many ages before, so elegant in its design, so regular in its structure, so animated, so affecting, so near to the true dramatic model; while, on the contrary, the united wisdom of Greece, after ages of study, was not able to produce any thing approaching to perfection in this walk of poetry before the time of Æschylus." \*

Yet the hero of this poem, and the friends with whom he conversed, and the author of the book,† lived and acted

\* BISHOP LOWTH'S "Lectures on Hebrew Poetry," lect. xxxiii.

† It may be supposed that we have, in this remark, hastily, and without examination, taken for granted the disputed point of the authorship of this book. We have not, indeed, felt ourselves called upon to give the arguments, *pro* and *con*, at length; but, having carefully investigated this question, we are fully satisfied that the book is as ancient as its subject, and was most probably written by Job himself. In support of our opinion, we select a few brief sentences from an eminent author. Dr. Magee, speaking on this point, says, "If, in short, there be, on the whole, that genuine air of the antique which those distinguished scholars, Schultens, Lowth, and Michaëlis, affirm in every respect to pervade the work, we can scarcely hesitate to pronounce, with Lowth and Sherlock, that the Book of Job is the oldest in the world now extant." After having examined the arguments which have been put forward in favour of the opinion, that Moses was the author, Dr. Magee proceeds to say, "There seems, then, upon the whole, sufficient ground for the conclusion, that this book was not the production of Moses, but of some earlier age: and there appears no good reason to suppose, that it was not written by Job himself. Lowth favours this idea, and Peters urges some arguments of no inconsiderable weight in its support. But whether we suppose Job the author of the book, or not, its great anti-



and wrote in the infancy of Babylon and Assyria, before Egypt had a name, before Troy was built ; when Grecian art had no existence. Truly to the Bible we are indebted for the early history of mankind.

This remarkable fact deserves close attention. We have very slender means of ascertaining the state of society, and the intellectual condition of mankind, from the days of Noah to the time of Abraham, except those which are presented to us in the Book of Job. Here we have a description of human life and manners ; here we have a specimen of the moral state and mental cultivation of mankind, two or three generations after the Dispersion. The life, character, companions, and writings of Job unveil this period of the world's history to our view ; and we find that in these early times they who plunged not into the absurd vices of idolatry, but remained faithful to the teaching and worship of Jehovah, exhibit a measure of intellectual culture, general information, reasoning powers, and sterling sense, which would render men highly respectable in any age or nation of the world.

As might have been expected, the Arabian and Mahomedan writers have preserved numerous traditions of this patriarch ; but they are generally so trifling as to be unwor-

quity, and even its priority to the age of Moses, seems to stand on strong grounds. And, upon the whole, perhaps we may not unreasonably conjecture the history of the book to be this : The poem being originally written either by Job, or some contemporary of his, and existing at the time of Moses, might fall into his hands, whilst residing in the land of Midian, or afterward, when in the neighbourhood of Idumea ; and might naturally be made use of by him to represent to the Hebrews, either whilst pining under their Egyptian bondage, or murmuring at their long wanderings in the wilderness, the great duty of submission to the will of God. We may also suppose, that Moses, in transcribing, might have made some small and unimportant alterations, which will sufficiently account for occasional and partial resemblances of expression between it and the Pentateuch, if such there be. I have the satisfaction also to find, that this notion is not without support from many respectable authorities. The ancient commentator on Job, under the title of Origen, has handed down a piece of traditional history which perfectly accords with it. Many of the most respectable early writers adopted the same idea, as may be seen in Huet ; and certainly it possesses this decided advantage, that it *solves all the phenomena.*" (DR. MAGEE "On Atonement and Sacrifice," vol. ii. p. 84.)



thy of perusal. We only give the following :—“The Mahomedan writers tell us that Job was of the race of Esau,\* and was blessed with a numerous family and abundant riches ; but that God proved him, by taking away all that he had, even his children, who were killed by the fall of a house ; notwithstanding which, he continued to serve God, and to return him thanks, as usual : that he was then struck with a filthy disease, his body being so full of worms, and so offensive, that, as he lay on the dunghill, none could bear to come near him : that his wife, however, (whom some call Rahmat, the daughter of Ephraim, the son of Joseph ; and others, Makhir, the daughter of Manasses,) attended him with great patience, supporting him with what she earned by her labour ; but that the devil appearing to her one day, after having reminded her of her past prosperity, promised her that, if she would worship him, he would restore what they had lost ; whereupon she asked her husband’s consent, who was so angry at the proposal, that he swore, if he recovered, to give his wife a hundred stripes ; that Job then cried unto the Lord, uttering this prayer : ‘ Verily, evil hath afflicted me ; but thou art the most merciful of those who show mercy ;’ and having pronounced these words, God sent Gabriel, who, taking him by the hand, raised him up ; and at the same time a fountain sprung up at his feet, of which having drunk, the worms fell off his body, and, washing therein, he recovered his former health and beauty : that God then restored all to him double ; his wife also becoming young and handsome again, and bearing him twenty-six sons : and that Job, to satisfy his oath, was directed by God to strike her one blow with a palm-branch having a hundred leaves. Some, to express the great riches which were bestowed on Job after his sufferings, say he had two threshing-floors, one for wheat, and the other for barley ; and that God sent two clouds, which rained gold on the one and silver on the other, till

\* The Koran is no historical or chronological authority ; in proof of which, it may be observed, that it makes Mary, the mother of Jesus, the sister of Aaron. (Chap. xix.)



they ran over. The traditions differ as to the continuance of Job's calamities: one will have it to be eighteen years; another, thirteen; another, three; and another, exactly seven years, seven months, and seven hours." \*

Allowing Job to have been contemporary with Reu, the next patriarch in the line of Abraham is SERUG. Bochart conjectures that from him the town of Sarug was named; which was near Chauæ, in Mesopotamia. Suidas and others attribute to him the introduction of the idolatry of deifying the dead, as the benefactors of mankind. Indeed, the generality of the Christian fathers, as well as oriental writers, are positive in their assertions, that the postdiluvian idolatry arose into important and fatal influence in the days of Serug; that, indeed, just as impiety became general during the life of Enoch in the old world, so did it again acquire ascendancy during the life of this patriarch.

NAHOR was the son of Serug. In his time, according to Eutychius, flourished Zorodasht, or the elder Zoroaster, the founder of the Zabian religion; and, according to Abulfaragi, on the authority of Arudha, a Canaanitish historian, the trial of Job began in the early part of the life of this patriarch; a statement which agrees sufficiently with the chronology which we have adopted.

TERAH was the son of Nahor, and the father of Nahor, Haran, and Abraham. He left Ur of the Chaldees, where he had formerly resided, to settle at Haran in Mesopotamia. The scripture plainly intimates that this patriarch and his family had fallen into idolatrous practices. (Joshua xxiv. 2—15.)

What is recorded of these individuals, casts but little light on the history of the age in which they lived. We may safely conclude, that the state of society in general remained just as it was in the time of Job, although it appears suffi-

\* SALE'S "Koran," chap. xxi., and *notes*.



ciently plain, that, notwithstanding the separation of the different tribes of mankind, and their occupying various and often distant districts of country, idolatry had nevertheless assumed a fearful influence, and was advancing with terrible rapidity.

The next individual presented to our notice occupied a most prominent position, both with respect to the history and the religion of the world. The circumstances of his life will therefore present subjects deserving the most careful investigation. In attempting this, we have an important advantage,—Moses supplies us with a history of ABRAHAM. The information given us of preceding patriarchs is confined to brief and passing notices; with the father of the faithful, the Mosaic narrative may be said to commence. But as every particular in the life of this eminent person, by reason of its bearing on the future history of his descendants, has become invested with great importance, we have many and serious difficulties to contend with in endeavouring to give a condensed, but accurate, account of the life of this patriarch.

There can be no doubt that this branch of the family of Shem held a conspicuous rank among the rising tribes of mankind. The first information afforded us respecting it states, that the family of Terah left Ur of the Chaldees, and journeyed into Mesopotamia, when they settled in a district which they called Haran. This event is simply stated by Moses in these words: “And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son’s son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram’s wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.” (Gen. xi. 31.) In this passage we have no motive assigned for this movement; but it will be observed that it specifies Canaan as the destination aimed at, although the party for a while located at Haran.

Here, however, we avail ourselves of the light which the New Testament casts upon this subject. In the memorable



address of Stephen to the Jews, immediately preceding his martyrdom, he says, "The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land." (Acts vii. 2—4.) This text informs us, that Abram received this first revelation from God while yet in Chaldea; a fact which seems to confirm the opinion, that idolatry had obtained great influence in that country in the days of Terah, and supplies that information respecting the motives for this journey which is not found in the writings of Moses.\* From the whole it is reasonable to conclude, that Abram, having received this call, induced his father, and several members of the family, to accompany him; but that, having come as far as Haran, his father preferred settling there, and that the whole company remained with him until his death; when Abram, having received a further intimation from heaven, and one more precise and definite in its requirements, journeyed from thence into the land of Canaan.

The chronology of these events is, however, the great difficulty in this part of the history. No point is more necessary to a correct understanding of the scope of the narrative than this; and perhaps none has received a less satisfactory elucidation.

Moses says, "And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran." (Gen. xi. 26.) And, again: "And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran." (Verse 32.) We are also told that "Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran." (Gen. xii. 4.) Yet, notwithstanding this, we are assured by Stephen, in the address before referred to, that Terah was dead before Abram left Haran:

\* See also, in confirmation of this, Nehemiah ix. 7.



“From thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land.” (Acts vii. 4.) Now it is clear that there must be an error in one of these passages, or else that the first could not be intended to teach that Abram was born when Terah was seventy years of age. For if Terah was seventy at the birth of Abram, and Abram was seventy-five when he left Haran, then it is certain that Terah would only be one hundred and forty-five at that time, and that, if he lived to the age of two hundred and five, he could not, on these premisses, have died before Abram left Haran.

As we have already hinted, the best solution of this difficulty is far from satisfactory. Yet, in a case of this kind, where a comparison of several passages of holy scripture appears to issue in direct contradiction, it is necessary to examine those texts, and to ascertain whether the language of each of them is alike clear, full, and decisive. In the case before us it is not so; for, although the last three are very clear, the first appears to be dubious. It is not probable that the three sons of Terah mentioned in this text were all born in one year; and therefore there is an uncertainty as to its meaning. The eldest of these sons might have been born in the seventieth year of Terah's life; but was this Abram, or was he a younger son, born many years afterwards? This is a question which has been violently contested. As the first name is that of the father of the faithful, it has been, rather hastily we think, taken for granted, that he was the first-born. A careful consideration of the context will render an opposite opinion probable. When Abram left Haran, he took with him Lot, a son of his brother of this name, who then appears to have been married. This in itself would lead us to suppose that Haran must have been an elder brother; an opinion which derives much greater probability from the fact, that, before the family left Chaldea, Nahor, the other brother, was married to Milcah, the daughter of Haran. The presumption, therefore, is, that this patriarch was born when Terah was seventy years of age; and that Nahor and Abram were younger, the latter having been born when his father was



one hundred and thirty. But this opinion has been rather fiercely opposed on several grounds: it has been alleged, that it is contrary to the express letter of scripture; that it is absurd to suppose that Abraham's faith should be so celebrated on account of his believing that he should have a son when he was a hundred years of age, if he himself was born when his father was one hundred and thirty; that, moreover, it violates the "various parallel series of astronomical time,—jubilees, metonic cycles, and the larger cycles of the universe,"—into which the chronology of the Septuagint has been arranged; and, lastly, that the Samaritan Pentateuch gives the correct age of Terah, saying that he was only one hundred and forty-five at the time of his death.

It will be necessary to bestow a passing notice on these several objections.

1. When it is urged that our view is opposed to the literal teaching of holy scripture, the language is unwarrantably strong. Do the persons who say so maintain that Terah begat these three sons in the same year? and that the text of scripture asserts this; and, although Terah was married at seventy, and his father at seventy-nine, (for the persons who maintain this opinion, adhere to the Septuagint numbers,) that the former had a grandson and granddaughter married long before he was one hundred and forty-five? We do not in these circumstances think that we depart from the plain teaching of scripture, in the opinion which we have formed.

2. The second objection is urged with great force by Mr. Cuninghame, who remarks, "The greatness of Abraham's faith, in believing that he should have a son at one hundred, is every where spoken of" as miraculous, "while he himself, on this scheme, is procreated by his father at one hundred and thirty!" And this is stated by Professor Wallace to be an "unanswerable conclusion." \* It is perfectly astonishing to observe the conflicting results which are drawn from the same premisses by minds under a different bias; but in this

\* "The True Age of the World," p. 47.



case we differ altogether in our estimation of the premisses. We deny that the greatness of Abraham's faith is either regarded as miraculous, or even greatly celebrated, for believing that he should have a son at one hundred. If it was so, why did he marry Keturah afterwards? It was Sarah who "was barren." The age of Abraham is not put forth as the difficulty, but the age and condition of his wife.

But we are told that this opinion destroys all the cycles into which the Septuagint chronology is arranged.

On this part of the subject, we wish to express ourselves with becoming deference to those learned men who have advocated and placed so much reliance on these systems of cycles; yet we feel bound to say that to us it conveys no satisfactory conviction or information. If the most persevering and devoted ingenuity could give plausibility and currency to a theory, Mr. Cuninghame would have brought this into universal acceptance; but, notwithstanding a most patient and careful perusal of his facts and arguments, we are yet unconvinced that there is any connexion whatever between the great astronomical divisions of time, and historical chronology: with this objection, therefore, we have no concern, inasmuch as the arrangement spoken of, in our judgment, is of no authority.

3. The fact, that the Samaritan text makes the age of Terah but one hundred and forty-five, is important; and yet it cannot supersede the authoritative teaching of the Hebrew, the Septuagint, and Josephus; all of which, on this point, are in perfect harmony. On the whole, therefore, although we do not by any means regard the point as indisputable, we are disposed to follow Hales, Clinton, and Ussher, in placing the birth of Abram in the one hundred and thirtieth year of his father's age. Still, although we state this as the most probable conclusion, we fully agree with the observation of Clinton, that it is "impossible to fix the actual year of the birth of Abram."

Having disposed of this question, we proceed to sketch an outline of the history of this patriarch. There can be little doubt that Terah's family had been infected with idol-



atry. Suidas, indeed, affirms that he was a statuary, or maker of images; and in a Chaldean fragment, preserved by Epiphanius, it is said, "And from the times of Tharra, the father of Abraham, they introduced images and all the errors of idolatry; honouring their forefathers, and their departed predecessors, with effigies, which they fashioned after their likeness. They first made these effigies of earthenware; but afterwards, according to their different arts, they sculptured them in stone, and cast them in silver and gold, and wrought them in wood, and all kinds of different materials." \* This is rendered probable by the fact, that in the days of his grandson Laban, teraphim, or images of divination, were in common use. But, however this may be, it is certain that all antiquity unites in teaching that Abraham was persecuted by the Chaldeans for his piety, and faith in the one true God. This opinion derives great support from a passage in the Apocrypha. In Judith we are told, "This people are descended of the Chaldeans: and they sojourned heretofore in Mesopotamia, because they would not follow the gods of their fathers which were in the land of Chaldea. For they left the way of their ancestors, and worshipped the God of heaven, the God whom they knew: so they cast them out from the face of their gods, and they fled into Mesopotamia, and sojourned there many days. Then their God commanded them to depart from the place where they sojourned, and to go into the land of Chanaan: where they dwelt, and were increased with gold and silver, and with very much cattle." (Judith v. 6—9.)

It seems, therefore, reasonable to conclude, not only that idolatry was at this period practised by the Cuthite founders of Babel, but that the descendants of Shem who remained in that country were also affected by it, the family of Abram being among the number. In these circumstances Abram, as Stephen informs us, was visited by God, and called to leave that country. He did so, accompanied by his father's family. But the journey which was thus begun took them

\* CORY'S "Fragments," p. 55.



only to Haran in Mesopotamia, where they sojourned *many days*. Dr. Hales estimates this period at fourteen years. After this, Terah died, when Abram received a further command from Jehovah.

The account of this second call is thus given in the book of Genesis : "And the Lord said to Abram, Go forth out of thy land, out of thy kindred, and out of the house of thy father, and come into the land which I shall show thee. And I will make thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and magnify thy name, and thou shalt be blessed. And I will bless those that bless thee, and curse those that curse thee, and in thee shall all the tribes of the earth be blessed." (Chap. xii. 1—3.)

We have given the above account translated from the Septuagint, in preference to the words of the authorized version, as the latter confounds the two calls; although, when the language of scripture is faithfully rendered and strictly observed, the distinction is clear. In the first, the land to which he is called is left quite indefinite, as it was simply intended to be a temporary resting-place; in the second, it is distinctly specified as the land which the Lord should show him. The first call simply required him to leave his country and his kindred; but the second definitively enjoined him to leave his father's house.\* That this was not included in the first call, is evident from the fact, that his father's family accompanied him on the journey; but now he leaves them, taking with him only righteous Lot. This second call, also, Abram obeyed, and "went out, not knowing whither he went." (Heb. xi. 8.) "So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the

\* Hence the ground and necessity of the second call recorded here, and which is introduced in a very remarkable manner, לך-לך *lech-lecha*, "Go for thyself." (DR. ADAM CLARKE *in loco*.)



land of Canaan ; and into the land of Canaan they came.” (Gen. xii. 4, 5.)

We have not now to discuss the character and extent of the several religious revelations which were successively made by God to this patriarch : a suitable place for this inquiry will be afforded in a future chapter. We cannot, however, overlook the great importance which attaches, in an historical point of view, to these actions of Abraham. Here we have a man endowed with extraordinary powers of mind, moving in a conspicuous and influential sphere in society, and possessing considerable wealth, yet placing himself entirely at the disposal of a supreme and overruling Providence. In his case, all that pertained to him of an earthly character was made subordinate to his religious hopes and prospects. On this point, the testimony of the Epistle to the Hebrews is most explicit, as it assures us that Abram “sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise : for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” (Heb. xi. 9, 10.) And lest there should be any misapprehension on this part of the subject, the city is immediately afterward called “a heavenly country.” We have therefore, in the case of this patriarch, to contemplate a man in the most elevated circumstances, fully devoting himself to the will of God, and placing his character, comfort, substance, and even his life, at the Divine disposal. This is deeply interesting, both as a purely historical phenomenon, and on account of its results. Men are celebrated for great actions of body or mind ; but especially when these actions are continued, and exhibit a series of greatness ; and, above all, when important beneficial consequences result from such efforts. Yet, if we place Abraham and his deeds by the side of any of the most renowned names of antiquity, and judge them, either in regard of the soundest principles of true dignity, or the immense benefits which have resulted to mankind from their exertions, what mental or moral elevation did Nimrod, Ninus, Sesostris, or Cyrus, display, that may



be placed in comparison with the heroic self-devotedness of Abraham? While their course exhibited blessing and cursing, good and evil,—the latter frequently preponderating,—the life of Abraham was uniformly beneficial in its influence upon his generation. All antiquity repeats his praises, and celebrates the achievements of his cultivated intellect, his martial prowess, his princely demeanour. As we are bound to draw a brief sketch of his career, we record here one or two notices of this eminent man, preserved from ancient profane authors, and handed down to our day.

Eupolemus says that “in the tenth generation (after the Flood), in the city of Camarina of Babylonia, which some call the city of Uric, and which signifies a city of the Chaldeans, the thirteenth in descent, lived Abraham, of a noble race, and superior to all others in wisdom, of whom they relate that he was the inventor of astrology and Chaldean magic; and that, on account of his eminent piety, he was esteemed by God. It is further said, that, under the directions of God, he removed and lived in Phenicia, and there taught the Phenicians the motions of the sun and moon, and all other things; for which reason he was held in great reverence by their king.” \*

Nicolaus Damascenus relates that he “was king of Damascus, and he came thither as a stranger with an army from that part of the country which is situated above Babylon of the Chaldeans; but, after a short time, he again emigrated from this region with his people, and transferred his habitation to the land which was then called Cananæa, but now Judea, together with all the multitude which had increased with him; of whose history I shall give an account in another book. The name of Abram is well known, even to this day, in Damascus; and a village is pointed out which is still called the house of Abram.” †

Berosus, also, speaking of this eminent man, states that, “after the Deluge, in the tenth generation, was a certain man among the Chaldeans, renowned for his jus-

\* CORY'S “Fragments,” p. 57.

† *Ibid.* p. 58.



tice and great exploits, and for his skill in the celestial sciences." \*

This eminently-gifted and cultivated man, in obedience to the Divine command, journeyed from Haran, where, according to Abulfaragi, he had resided fifteen years, and travelled into Canaan. The first place of his location in this country is called, in our authorized version, "the plain of Moreh;" (Gen. xii. 6;) but this, as we have already intimated, is a mis-translation. The term in the Hebrew original should have been rendered "oak," and not "plain." The Septuagint gives the entire passage thus: "And Abraham traversed the land lengthwise, as far as the place Sychem, to the high oak; and the Canaanites then inhabited the land."

Here Jehovah was pleased to speak a third time unto his servant, and to enter into a covenant with him, ratifying the promise he had made to him before he left Charran, which was both of a temporal and of a spiritual nature, and adding a distinct promise of the possession of this country unto his descendants: "Unto thy seed will I give this land." (Verse 7.) These words must be taken in immediate connexion with the promise made unto him at Haran. On that occasion the Almighty said, "Get thee out of thy country, unto a land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation." (Verses 1, 2.) *Here* the promise is fulfilled in this particular, the land is shown unto him; and the promise is confirmed. In its temporal aspect it insured individual and family prosperity, and that he should be the father of a great nation. Although we do not here enter into a consideration of the spiritual privileges which this promise held forth to the faith of the patriarch, it is necessary to notice the religious conduct which was required of Abraham, as an implied condition on his part. That he was commanded to acknowledge, and publicly to worship, the one true God, cannot be doubted; and we find his conduct answerable to this requirement. "There builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him." (Verse 7.)

\* CORY'S "Fragments, p. 36.



Many commentators believed that Abram not only worshipped God in his family, but diligently taught his name and his law to those with whom he came in contact. Hence the Chaldee paraphrasts, when rendering the clause as given by Moses, "the souls that they had gotten in Haran," (verse 5,) use these words, "the souls of those whom they proselyted in Haran."

From this place Abram journeyed to the neighbourhood of Bethel, and there also "he builded an altar to the Lord, and," as the authorized text states, "called upon the name of the Lord." (Verse 8.) Upon this passage, in its true theological signification, we shall hereafter have to remark. From thence Abram journeyed, still going toward the south, until, a famine afflicting this land, he went down into Egypt to sojourn there.

Here an event took place which has in some measure obscured the lustre of Abraham's character, and greatly perplexed historians and commentators. On going down into Egypt, Abram feared that the beauty of his wife would expose him to danger; and, under this influence, he was led to devise an unworthy expedient, which is thus narrated by the inspired historian: "And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon: therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive. Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee. And it came to pass, that, when Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman that she was very fair. The princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commended her before Pharaoh: and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. And he entreated Abram well for her sake: and he had sheep, and oxen, and he-asses, and men-servants, and maid-servants, and she-asses, and camels. And the Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai Abram's wife. And Pharaoh called Abram,



and said, What is this that thou hast done unto me? why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife? Why saidst thou, She is my sister? so I might have taken her to me to wife: now therefore behold thy wife; take her, and go thy way. And Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him: and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had." (Verses 11—20.)

It seems impossible to acquit Abram of great impropriety of conduct in this whole transaction; though at present we have not to do with the religious character of this patriarch, but his history. In relation to this, these events cast great light upon the manners and usages of mankind at this period. However Abram might in this matter have failed as to his confidence in the protection of Heaven, he was not mistaken as to the probability that the beauty of his wife would attract attention, and that she would be taken from him. The whole of this account, as well as the similar case which afterward occurred with Abimelech at Gerar, clearly shows, that the true and proper dignity of the female character was not recognised in general society at that period. "The woman was taken into Pharaoh's house." The circumstances of the case prove that this must have been contrary to the will of Abram and Sarai, and was therefore a great outrage on the personal liberty of strangers. Yet, neither this, nor the similar case which afterwards occurred at Gerar, is mentioned as any infraction of the established usages and rights then generally recognised. On the contrary, Abimelech is said to have done this in the integrity of his heart, and innocence of his hands; a clear proof that he would not have taken her, had he known her to have been Abram's wife, and that the practice of sovereigns, or great men, of taking unmarried women to be their wives, with or without their consent, was the general practice of the age.

We learn from Josephus, that Abram had important intercourse with the Egyptians on different topics connected with learning. He says, "Whereas the Egyptians were formerly addicted to different customs, and despised one another's



sacred and accustomed rites, and were very angry one with another on that account, Abram conferred with each of them, and, confuting the reasonings they made use of, every one for their own practices, demonstrated that such reasonings were vain and void of truth ; whereupon he was admired by them in those conferences as a very wise man, and one of great sagacity, when he discoursed upon any subject he undertook ; and this, not only in understanding it, but in persuading other men also to assent to him. He communicated unto them arithmetic, and delivered to them the science of astronomy ; for, before Abram came into Egypt, they were unacquainted with those parts of learning ; for that science came from the Chaldeans into Egypt, and from thence to the Greeks also."

On leaving Egypt, Abram returned to his former station near Bethel ; and here Lot, who up to this period had travelled in his company, separated from him. The flocks of these distinguished patriarchs having become so numerous, that their herdsmen had repeated quarrels about water and pasturage, Abram thereupon gave his nephew his choice of the country ; kindly saying, "If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right ; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left." (Gen. xiii. 9.) Upon which, Lot, looking over the surrounding country, selected the vale of Sodom for his residence, on account of its great fertility ; not taking into consideration the character of the inhabitants, who were exceedingly wicked.

Soon after this, we are informed that this country was the scene of a predatory war. The sacred narrative states that "Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations, made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar." (Gen. xiv. 1, 2.) In the first struggle these Canaanitish kings were worsted, and became subject to their conquerors ; but after twelve years they again asserted their independence, and threw off the yoke. In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and his



confederate or tributary kings again invaded the country, defeated the army which the five associated kings had raised to oppose them, and, having slain the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah, carried away the people and the property of those cities as spoil.

This, as well as the other important events of this period, has called forth a great variety of opinions. Shuckford contends that the Chedorlaomer of Moses was Ninyas, the son of Ninus and Semiramis. On the other hand, Dr. Hales maintains that this martial prince was none other than Hushang king of Persia; and Sir William Drummond, going beyond all others, would have us believe that on this occasion Abraham defeated Nimrod himself. We are, however, inclined to think that the subject is so enveloped in difficulty, as not to admit of explicit and satisfactory solution. We might, perhaps, have had more definite information on this point, if our most eminent authors had not been influenced by their various favourite theories. Our limits preclude an elaborate investigation of the question. But we incline to believe that those who regard the Assyrian empire as being at this period in that infantile state which would preclude the possibility of its waging war at any great distance from its capital, and those who contend that Chedorlaomer was either the sovereign of Nineveh, or of Persia, are alike mistaken. We think there can be no reasonable doubt of the extreme antiquity of the Assyrian empire. Syncellus assures us that in the time of Abraham the Assyrian government extended over the whole of Asia. Yet, nevertheless, the state of society was such as to preclude the probability that the sovereign of this empire would in person conduct a predatory war in this distant country, with an army which Abram, with his three hundred and eighteen servants and a few allies, was able entirely to overthrow.

We know that, long after this period, the different tribes of Israel, although regarded together as one powerful nation, retained, and frequently exercised, the privilege of carrying on petty wars on their own account. The people of Simeon and Judah combined for a common object; those of Dan



had recourse to guile as well as force ; and it must be evident that the men who fought under the banners of Gideon and Jephthah were drawn almost entirely from their respective tribes or families. It is more than probable that a similar state of things obtained in the neighbouring countries. We are, therefore, quite disposed to agree with the opinion of Dr. Russell on this subject ; who says, “It is obvious, therefore, that the Assyrian empire might exist and be acknowledged over a vast extent of country, though there were, at the same time, in federal subjection to it, a great number of small potentates who exercised in their several districts a sovereign authority almost independent. The kings of Elam, of Shinar, of Ellasar, and their confederate Tidal, the king of nations, on the one hand ; and Bera and Birsha with their allies on the other ; were nothing more than the heads of clans, who enjoyed the privilege of carrying away one another’s cattle, or of imposing a tribute as the price of forbearance. They are, it is true, called kings, so were the dukes of Edom ; and as every head of a house who owned a flock and could protect it, in the desert, or on the mountain, was entitled to the proud appellation of a king of Edom, so every chieftain in Elam or Shinar, who could muster men enough to form a marauding expedition, was known by his enemies as well as his friends as a king of those countries.” \*

These opinions appear to be greatly strengthened, if not confirmed, by the fact, that Nicolaus Damascenus makes Abram to be king of Damascus ; saying, “Abraham was king of Damascus, and he came thither as a stranger with an army from that part of the country which is situated beyond Babylon.” We know the number of men composing this army, at least the main body of it,—Abraham’s three hundred and eighteen servants ; and, admitting that his auxiliaries amounted to an equal number, six or seven hundred men, even under the most favourable circumstances, could not accomplish what is recorded in the sacred narra-

\* RUSSELL’S “Connexion,” vol. ii. p. 133.



tive, unless the invading army had been limited in numbers, and deficient in organization. It must be borne in mind that the enemy was not only routed, but all the captives and spoil recovered. It is further important to observe, that there is not the slightest warrant for believing that, in this case, there was any miraculous, or even special, intervention of Divine Providence. The facts are simply recorded, without the slightest intimation of any Divine interference.

The return of Abraham, with the captives and spoil, stands connected with a circumstance which has given rise to a great variety of opinions. The sacred historian says, "Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine : and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him," (Abram,) "and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth : and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all." (Gen. xiv. 18—20.)

This circumstance, not particularly extraordinary in itself, has attracted unusual attention from the reference which St. Paul makes to it in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The historical fact, however, appears to be this : that Melchizedek, being a patriarchal prince, living in the neighbourhood, and a believer in the true God, was consequently the priest of his tribe ; and, sympathizing with the noble conduct of Abram, he provided refreshment for his men, and went out to meet him on his return from this conflict ; and that Abram, touched with his generosity, made him a present of a tenth part of the spoils which he had taken in the war.\*

\* It is universally admitted that this Melchizedek was king of Salem, or Jerusalem. Now, it is a singular fact that the only other king of this city whose name is mentioned, prior to the occupation of it by the Israelites, is called Adonizedek ; the first name meaning "king of righteousness," the second, "lord of righteousness." This suggests the curious inquiry, whether, as Pharoah, Abimelech, and other names had even at this early period become the distinctive appellations of the sovereigns of different places, without regard to their individual names, it might not have been so here, and a name meaning "king" or "lord of righteousness" made the general appellation of the kings of



Nothing can excel the true dignity of Abram's character on this occasion. He had hazarded his life in the pursuit and conquest of the allied kings; yet, on returning with the emancipated captives and their property, he refuses to take "from a thread even to a shoe-latchet." (Verse 23.) This circumstance, however, casts additional light upon the character and manners of the age. It clearly shows the predatory character of the wars then waged, and exhibits the patriarch as a striking exception to the practice of his times.

Soon after this event, the Almighty again made special revelations of his will to Abram; promising him an abundant posterity, and assuring him that the land on which he dwelt, even "from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates," should be given to his seed. (Gen. xv. 18.)

These repeated promises appear to have produced a great effect upon the minds of Abram and his wife; and, considering her advanced age, Sarai, despairing of being herself a mother, urged her husband to go in unto Hagar her maid. Abram listened to this advice, and begat a son, who was called Ishmael.

As this case is generally regarded as an instance of polygamy, we call attention to the following observations of a learned author, which are calculated to place the conduct of Abraham in a just point of view: "Abraham had one wife, Sarah; and he had not any other wife or concubine-wife in her time, that we are aware of. But Sarah, being naturally barren, which was the greatest of stigmas in those days, was unhappy; and she therefore resorted to a scheme which was sanctioned and recognised by the laws of that emigrated Chaldean family,—the *supposition* of children. It appears to have been what we call a *fiction of law*. One of the

Jerusalem. If this conjecture is well founded, it is possible that we have, in this circumstance, a means of casting light on the Apostle's reference to Melchizedek as being "without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life;" (Heb. vii. 3;) the term "Melchizedek" not being a personal, but an official, appellation.



maid-servants was had with child by the husband, put to bed with the wife, and so delivered, that the attendants should receive the child from *inter genua* of the wife, and not of the natural mother, by an understood contrivance. (Gen. xxx. 3.) Abraham, in compliance with her request, *went in, once, unto her maid*, and begat Ishmael; who, being afterward disavowed by Sarah, was then considered in the light of a concubine's son. The Lord preserved the mother and the child from death. Abraham, whatever were his motives for so doing, did confine himself to one wife. 'And after Sarah's death, he *again* took a wife, and her name was Keturah.' " \*

After this event, when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him again; and made to him a communication more remarkable in its characters, and more extensive in its revelations, than any preceding one. On this occasion the rite of circumcision was appointed, and the patriarch was called into special covenant with Jehovah, and favoured with rich and glorious promises. In addition to many others, he was told that Sarai should bear a son within the ensuing year; that this son, whom the Lord predictively called Isaac, should be the heir of the covenant-promise. At this time, also, the name of Abram, which signified, "an elevated father," was changed, by divine appointment, to Abraham, "the father of a great multitude;" and Sarai, whose name signified, "my princess," was hereafter called Sarah, or "the princess." (Gen. xvii.) Jehovah thus manifested the superior dignity to which he had raised this devoted and distinguished pair.

Soon after this memorable visitation, another occurred scarcely less remarkable. Abraham, sitting in the tent-door in the heat of the day, is surprised by a visit from three angels in human form. Having hospitably invited them to remain and partake of refreshment, one of them assumes the Divine character, and renews to Abraham and Sarah the promise of a son; asserting, at the same time,

\* "Nimrod," vol. iv. p. 470.



his dignity, and challenging their faith, by asking, "Is any thing too hard for the LORD?" (Gen. xviii. 14.) This Divine Being remained in conversation with Abraham, after the two angels had left him to journey toward Sodom; and then informed him that, in consequence of the great wickedness of that and the neighbouring cities, he was come down to destroy them. Abraham remembered his nephew Lot, and interceded on behalf of the devoted inhabitants of that country. Nothing can be more nervous and elegant than the manner of his prayer. The patriarch pleads with God until he obtains a promise that if ten righteous men were found in Sodom, the city should be spared for their sake. Satisfied with this promise, Abraham ceased. The Lord left him, and Abraham returned to his place. On the following morning Abraham, anxious for the fate of his relative, went out to the place where he had conversed with the Lord, and "looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace." Only Lot was found righteous in this depraved vicinity: he and his family were delivered, while all those cities and their population were destroyed by fire from heaven.

Scarcely any dispensation of Providence since the Deluge stands out with such prominence as this. We have not now to discuss the religious aspect of this terrible infliction. But, regarded as a mere historical event, it exhibits in a very remarkable manner the direct interposition of God in the government of the world. The point to which we are specially desirous of calling attention, is the means by which this dispensation was effected. We are told by Moses that the "vale of Siddim was full of slime pits;" (Gen. xiv. 10;) that is, the surface was full of bitumen, a highly inflammable substance. This geological character of the soil was, in the hand of God, made the instrument of destruction. The fire from heaven ignited the surface of the ground, which was burnt up, and thus the entire district was literally consumed. We can scarcely contemplate a more terrible visitation. It is remarkable that the district,



even to the present day, bears incontestable evidence to the facts connected with this judgment, and the interpretation which we have given to it. This part of the vale of the Jordan is now depressed one thousand three hundred and twelve feet below the level of the Mediterranean Sea, showing that by some extraordinary means the soil has been either consumed or has sunk : but we are not left in doubt as to which of these causes has operated. Le Clerc, speaking on this subject, says, “ We have already shown, that this whole tract of land was full of bitumen, which, as it will easily take fire, was soon kindled by the lightning ; and the flame was not only to be seen upon the superficies of the earth, which frequently happens in such places, but so pierced into the subterranean veins of brimstone and bitumen, that, that matter being destroyed, the whole earth sunk down, and afforded a receptacle to the waters flowing thither. If, to these waters perpetually running into it, we add the bitumen which at once broke out of the earth and mingled with the water, we shall have a full description of the *Lacus Asphaltites*.” \*

Soon after this infliction, Abraham journeyed southward, and sojourned in Gerar, a distance of only about six miles. Here, as we have already intimated, Sarah was again called the sister of Abraham, and, as had been done in Egypt, was taken into the house of Abimelech, but soon restored to her husband ; God having spoken to the king in a dream, and commanded him to make instant reparation for the wrong which he had done. In accordance with the Divine promise, Isaac was here born. Here, also, at the instance of his wife, and greatly against his own inclinations, Abraham sent away Hagar and Ishmael. (Gen. xx., xxi.)

We are now conducted to that event in the life of this patriarch which has perhaps distinguished him more than any other : we allude to his implicit obedience to the Divine command, when called to offer up his son Isaac as a burnt-offering. This extraordinary act has been so often

\* LE CLERC'S “Dissertations,” pp. 213, 223.



and so fully illustrated, that it will be sufficient for us here to remark, that it not only supplies important information respecting the religion of Abraham, but also casts light upon his history. It exhibits in a striking manner the character of his mind, under circumstances of the utmost trial. This was the son of his old age, born under the covenant, and a son on whose issue depended great and gracious promises; who was arrived at manhood, and was at once his father's heir, and his mother's favourite. All these circumstances were calculated tenderly to affect the mind of Abraham. "The common feelings of human nature, the uncommon feelings of the aged patriarch, all protested against such a deed." Yet, having received the Divine command, neither the power of feeling, nor the dictates of what appeared to be his interest, aggravated as they were by the interval of time, the length of the journey, and the discourse of Isaac, prevented the operation of the inflexible obedience of the patriarch. He "believed God," and could trust him to carry out his gracious purposes in his own way. He therefore fully obeyed the Divine commandment. After this, Abraham and his wife returned to Mamre, where they died.

The following has been given as a correct account of the various journeys of this patriarch :—

|                                                                 | Miles. |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| 1. From Ur in Chaldea to Haran .....                            | 376    |
| 2. — Haran to Sichem .....                                      | 400    |
| 3. — Sichem to Mamre.....                                       | 28     |
| 4. — Mamre to Egypt .....                                       | 240    |
| 5. — Egypt to Mamre .....                                       | 240    |
| 6. — Mamre to the plain near Hebron .....                       | 32     |
| 7. — the plain of Mamre to Dan (where Lot<br>was rescued) ..... | 124    |
| 8. — Dan he pursued the defeated kings to<br>Hobah .....        | 80     |
| 9. — Hobah back to Sodom .....                                  | 160    |
| 10. — Sodom to the plain of Mamre .....                         | 40     |
| 11. — Mamre to Gerar .....                                      | 6      |



|                                            | Mil s. |
|--------------------------------------------|--------|
| 12. From Gerar to Beersheba.....           | 12     |
| 13. — Beersheba to Moriah .....            | 40     |
| 14. — Moriah to Beersheba .....            | 40     |
| 15. — Beersheba to the plain of Mamre..... | 16     |
|                                            | <hr/>  |
|                                            | 1,834* |
|                                            | <hr/>  |

So that, altogether, Abraham travelled one thousand eight hundred and thirty-four miles; which, when we take into account the flocks and herds, the servants and substance, which had generally to be removed, shows a great amount of journeying for a single family.

We have now briefly to notice the history of Lot. This patriarch was the nephew of Abraham, and the only one of his family who accompanied him from Haran: a circumstance which alone would be sufficient to prove that Lot was a believer in the true God, and worshipped him, even if the scriptures had not so explicitly declared that he was righteous: for Abraham was certainly called away from all idolatrous influence, that he might be a witness for the truth to all the nations with which he came in contact.

After having journeyed with Abraham to Sichem, thence to Mamre, afterward down into Egypt, and back again to the plain of Mamre, he separated from his company. This event was occasioned by the multitude of cattle severally possessed by these patriarchs. The herdsmen of Abraham strove with those of Lot, about the most eligible pasturage for the flocks. Abraham, having heard of this contention, with his characteristic nobility of mind, addressed his relation thus: "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or

\* BUNTING'S "Travels of the Patriarchs," p. 57.



if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left." (Gen. xiii. 8, 9.) Lot instantly availed himself of this liberal offer, but unhappily made his selection irrespective of the character of the inhabitants of the land, who were well known to be "wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly." (Verse 13.) Seeing that the vale of Sodom was well watered and fruitful, he went thither to reside. Eight years rolled on, Abraham having removed to the plain of Mamre near Hebron, when the confederate kings, whose yoke the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah had thrown off, invaded the land, defeated the forces sent out against them; and all that remained alive after the conflict, and all their substance, with Lot and his family and his property, were carried away as captives and as spoil. This disaster was, however, in a great measure, retrieved by the noble conduct of Abraham, who, with his armed servants and friends, pursued the victorious host, surprised and overcame them, and delivered Lot and his family, and all the captives and spoil. This ought to have taught Lot the danger of dwelling with a wicked people; but he still abode at Sodom.

Twelve or fourteen years passed away after this event. The men of Sodom had forgotten the chastisement which they had received, and had become more than ever confirmed in their wickedness; when Sodom, Gomorrah, and all the cities of the plain, were destroyed by fire from heaven. Lot and his family were saved from this terrible visitation by the ministry of angels. Yet, notwithstanding this gracious interposition, his wife, lingering behind, in disobedience to the Divine command, perished. The conduct of Lot in the mountain whither he had retired, scarcely admits of explanation. It has been generally supposed that his daughters believed that the whole of the human race were destroyed, except their father and themselves. But how they could have thought so, when they had previously tarried at Zoar, it is not easy to conceive; and we cannot but regard the entire case as one of those problems which the scriptures present as indeterminate, on account of a deficiency of data on which to form any satisfactory conclusion.



We must now give a passing notice of the life and character of ISHMAEL. He was the son of Abraham by Hagar, Sarah's maid. Prior to his birth, his mother, having been hardly treated by Sarah, fled into the wilderness, where an angel of the Lord appeared unto her, and bade her return to her mistress; adding, "Thou shalt bring forth a son, and call his name Ishmael;" ("The Lord hath hearkened;") "because the Lord hath heard thee in thy affliction. He shall be a fierce, savage man, whose hand shall be against all men, and the hands of all men against him." (Gen. xvi. 11, 12.) Hagar returned, therefore, to Abraham's house, and gave birth to a son, whom she called Ishmael. This person is therefore one of the few individuals whose name was given by Divine appointment before he was born. When he was about nineteen years of age, his conduct toward Isaac gave offence to Sarah, and she induced Abraham to send away the lad and his mother; and, being expelled from their home, they wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba, and were reduced to great distress. In these circumstances Hagar was again directed, encouraged, and comforted by the angel of God, who said unto her, "What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation. And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink. And God was with the lad." (Gen. xxi. 17—20.) Ishmael and his mother abode in the desert of Paran, where he became very expert in archery; and his mother married him to an Egyptian woman. He had twelve sons, from whom are derived the twelve tribes of the Arabians, still subsisting; and Jerome says, that in his time they called the districts of Arabia by the names of these several tribes.\*

Ishmael is regarded as the great patriarch of the Arabians, and therefore of the Mahomedan dynasties: he is consequently made very prominent in all their traditions and fabu-

\* See TAYLOR'S edition of CALMET'S "Dictionary," *sub voce*.



lous history. We give a few extracts, illustrative of the character of these statements. Having detailed the expulsion of Hagar and her child from the family of Abraham, their destitution in the desert, and the fact that the mother leaves Ishmael to go in search of water, the narrator proceeds : “ In the mean time, equally impelled by the agonies of thirst, and impatience at the absence of its mother, the child continued to cry most bitterly, and, as children in similar circumstances are frequently observed to do, violently beat his heels against the earth ; when, extraordinary to relate, a transparent gush of water bubbled at its feet, and shortly overflowed the surrounding spot. This was the fountain which subsequently received the appellation of Zemzem. Attracted by the cries of her child, Hagar was now returning in despair, having discovered neither water nor a human being to direct her in her research ; when, on rejoining the child, to her unspeakable satisfaction, she descried the refreshing element, which already streaming along the earth, her first impulse was to gather up the dust in order to confine and prevent it from running to waste. For this reason it settled at once round the head of the spring ; otherwise, as mentioned with regret, at a period long subsequent, by the prophet of the Arabs, the fountain of Zemzem would have furnished a noble stream, flowing, to the infinite advantage and delight of the inhabitants, through the very centre of Mekkah.

“ In a few days, when the water had accumulated to a considerable depth about the fountain-head, the fowls of the air began to be attracted to the spot from every side ; and this circumstance did not escape the observation of a party of the Arab tribe of Jorhem or Jorham ; who were also exploring the hills for water, on the failure of their own scanty well at the distance of a day’s journey from Mekkah. For, perceiving that the birds universally directed their flight towards, and hovered round, this particular spot, the natural conclusion was, that they were drawn together by some appearance of humidity, and most probably that there was a spring in the neighbourhood. Accordingly, when they



reached the place, the Jorhamites found, beyond their warmest expectations, an abundant supply of what they came in search of, and Hagar and her babe seated near the newly-discovered spring. Addressing themselves to the woman, they briefly demanded who it was that could have led her to this secluded solitude; but more particularly, to whom she was indebted for the discovery of that best boon of Heaven's beneficence, the bounteous spring that bubbled at her feet. In both instances she referred them to the providence of that ineffable Being who had not abandoned her in the hour of despair and affliction. They proceeded to observe, that, to a weak and timid creature like herself, an abode in such a solitary scene must, nevertheless, have proved extremely irksome and appalling; then describing whence they came, and that on the failure of the well which supported the establishment of their tribe, at the distance of about a day's journey, they had been engaged in exploring the wilderness for the means of relief, when Providence directed them to the spot where they now found her. In conclusion, they proposed, with her consent, to remain where they were, in order, by their presence, to contribute at once to dispel the irksomeness of solitude, and to aid her in the task of bringing up her child. To all this Hagar very readily acceded; and the Jorhamites, accordingly, removing to the spot, there remained with her, while her son Ishmael was advancing in years and strength, towards maturity and manhood.

“ In these circumstances three years had been suffered to elapse, when information was conveyed to Abraham, through the angel Gabriel, that God Almighty had provided for the abode of Ishmael, and that a considerable population had already collected round the spring so miraculously produced for his preservation. This intelligence awakened in the breast of Abraham an inclination to visit the child; and he requested the consent of Sarah, that he might proceed to Mekkah for that purpose. The consent of Sarah was, however, not obtained without some difficulty, and not without the express stipulation, that he should neither pass the



night nor take any repose at Mekkah ; a stipulation which she bound her husband to observe by the most solemn oath. From Abraham's abode in Palestine, to the residence of Ishmael in the territory of Hejaz, was a distance of five days' journey ; and as the obligation of his oath restrained him, it seems, from the absence of a single night, recourse must be had to the intervention of Heaven for the means of conveyance ; and that supernatural creature the Borauk, the same that, at a subsequent period, in one night, conveyed Mahommed from Mekkah to Jerusalem, was now selected to perform a similar service for the friend of God. Mounting his supernatural charger in the morning, accordingly, Abraham reached Mekkah by noon ; and, having seen both the child and its mother, returned, without having at all dismounted, to the presence of Sarah by the evening of the same day ; thus dispatching in one day a journey which, in the ordinary manner, is not to be accomplished in ten days. The visit was occasionally repeated in the same way." \*

However small the portion of truth which may really exist in this Mahomedan legend, it is generally maintained by the Arab writers, that Ishmael was connected by marriage with the tribe of the Jorhamites. Indeed, it is asserted that he married the daughter of Modad, king of Hejaz, who was descended lineally from Jorham, the founder of the kingdom.† Holy scripture, however, assures us that "his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt." (Gen. xxi. 21.) Whether this can be reconciled with Mahomedan tradition by supposing that Ishmael had more than one wife, we do not pretend to decide ; it is, however, admitted by all, that he had twelve sons, who became princes of tribes. It is equally certain that Ishmael was not entirely isolated from the family of his father ; for we are told, that when Abraham died, "his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before

\* *Tarikh Tebry*, translated in PRICE'S "History of Arabia," p. 62.

† "Ancient Universal History," vol. xvi. p. 299.



Mamre." (Gen. xxv. 9.) This is a pleasing proof that increasing years had taken away any asperity of feeling which might have existed in the early life of these two sons of Abraham; and we see these illustrious individuals uniting to pay the last tribute of affection and respect to the memory of their departed father.

The sacred record shows that the sons of Ishmael became persons of great consideration: the language used is remarkably significant: "These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their towns, and by their castles; twelve princes according to their nations;" (Gen. xxv. 16;) expressions which denote that they had obtained an extensive and settled location and dominion. This view is confirmed by the following passage: "And they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur, that is before Egypt, as thou goest toward Assyria." (Verse 18.) From this short statement we may see how far their territory extended; for Havilah, according to most geographers, was situated near the confluence of the Tigris and the Euphrates, and Shur on the isthmus which separates Arabia from Egypt, now called the Isthmus of Suez. We may therefore reasonably suppose, that as they possessed so long a tract of country, they would naturally extend their dominion on either side; an hypothesis supported by Josephus and others, who speak of Ishmael as the founder of the Arabian nation. This patriarch lived to a good old age: "And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven years: and he gave up the ghost and died; and was gathered unto his people." (Verse 17.)

We come now to ISAAC, the last individual of this series. He derived his name, which signifies "laughter," from the circumstance recorded Genesis xviii. 12—15; and xxi. 6, 7. In the first instance, Sarah had laughed, as if the idea of her having a son at her advanced age was impossible, and therefore ridiculous; until, reproved by the Lord, she was afraid; but when the gracious promise was fulfilled, and Sarah became the mother of a living son, referring to her former



incredulity, she exclaims, "God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me." "And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac."

We hear nothing further of importance in the life of Isaac, until he was called upon to take a part in that most memorable transaction which constituted the great trial of his father's faith. The age of Isaac at this time cannot be ascertained with accuracy: some writers have fixed it at thirteen, and others at thirty-seven; but Josephus, with greater show of reason, supposes him to have been twenty-five,\* which computation is adopted by Dr. Hales. This age is sufficient for all the circumstances which are recorded; namely, his bearing the wood for the burnt-offering, and his inquiry respecting the animal for the sacrifice. It is evident that this or any other computation consistent with the events alluded to, requires that Isaac should be a consenting party to this oblation.

The Jews say that when God bade Abraham go to Mount Moriah to offer his son, the patriarch inquired how he should know the exact locality, and that the answer was, "wheresoever he should see the glory of the Lord, that should be the place." Accordingly, he beheld a pillar of fire, reaching from the earth to heaven; and thereby knew *that* was the place. This is supposed to be the same spot where David stayed the pestilence, and was answered by God with fire from heaven. Josephus, probably on the authority of ancient Jewish tradition, professes to give us the conversation which took place between Abraham and Isaac at this time: "As soon as the altar was prepared, and Abraham had laid on the wood, and all things were entirely ready, he said to his son, 'O son, I poured out a vast number of prayers, that I might have thee for my son: when thou wast come into the world, there was nothing that could contribute to thy support for which I was not greatly solicitous, nor any thing wherein I thought myself happier, than to

\* *Antiq. Jud.* lib. i. cap. xiii. p. 2.



see thee grown up to man's estate, and that I might leave thee at my death the successor to my dominion ; but, since it was by God's will that I became thy father, and it is now his will that I relinquish thee, bear this consecration to God with a generous mind ; for I resign thee up to God, who has thought fit now to require this testimony of honour to himself, on account of the favours he hath conferred on me, in being to me a supporter and defender. Accordingly, thou, my son, wilt now die, not in any common way of going out of the world, but sent to God, the Father of all men, beforehand, by thy own father, in the nature of a sacrifice. I suppose he thinks thee worthy to get clear of this world, neither by disease, neither by war, nor by any other severe way by which death usually comes upon men ; but so that he will receive thy soul with prayers, and holy offices of religion, and will place thee near to himself, and thou wilt there be to me a succourer and supporter in my old age ; on which account I principally brought thee up, and thou wilt thereby procure me God for my comforter instead of thyself.'

"Now, Isaac was of such a generous disposition as became the son of such a father, and was pleased with this discourse ; and said, that 'he was not worthy to be born at first, if he should reject the determination of God and of his father, and should not resign himself up readily to both their pleasures ; since it would have been unjust if he had not obeyed, even if his father alone had so resolved.' So he went immediately to the altar to be sacrificed."

This extract is of great consequence, not so much on account of its casting important light on the history of this event, as of its exhibiting the unspiritual views which obtained among the Jews during the first century of the Christian era respecting the purposed sacrifice of Isaac. We have here no typical or predictive allusion, no reference to spiritual benefit, no notice either of a Redeemer, or of a resurrection from the dead. Although we are assured that, however these might have been overlooked by Jews in modern times, they were the great reasons for this terrible



trial of the faith of Abraham, and of the submission of his son.

The Divine purpose having been accomplished in this virtual sacrifice of Isaac, he was saved from death, and a ram substituted in his stead as a burnt-offering. We are thus presented with one of those striking instances of the selection of a name which frequently occur in the early books of scripture. When Abraham had arrived at the foot of the hill, leaving the young men and the ass, Isaac bearing the wood, and Abraham the fire and the knife, the son said, "My father, behold the fire and the wood : but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering ? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb." (Gen. xxii. 7, 8.) Now when the full light of the Divine purpose had been shed on this dark and mysterious providence, Isaac having been saved, and the ram caught in the thicket by his horns having been offered up as a sacrifice in his stead, Abraham calls the place, in reference to his reply to his son, and the actual fact of its fulfilment, Jehovah-Jireh, or "God will provide ;" which phrase passed into a proverb : "In the mountain" (or, "In great difficulties") "God will provide."

About fifteen years after this time, Sarah being dead, Abraham felt anxious that Isaac should have a wife who believed in and worshipped the one true and living God. He therefore sent an old and faithful servant to Haran to obtain from the family of his father a wife for his son Isaac. Nothing can exceed the simplicity and purity of this narrative in the book of Genesis.

We need not here even refer to the most prominent of these circumstances : the reader will be familiar with them ; but we may remark that they clearly show the just views which were then entertained of an immediate Providence, and the extent to which they were practically operative.

Isaac was forty years old when he was married, and he lived with his wife twenty years before they had children. This circumstance was a sore trial to the patriarch, and he "entreated the Lord" on this account, and the Lord heard him. Some time previous to her becoming a mother, Rebekah



was greatly distressed; and we are told, "She went to inquire of the Lord." (Gen. xxv. 22.) How this was done, we cannot tell. Commentators have given many conjectures, most of them sufficiently absurd. Probably we are to understand, that she made it the subject of special and earnest prayer to God, and that He graciously revealed the reply, either in a dream or vision, or by an audible voice. Whatever was the mode of communication, it was efficient: it gave Rebekah the important information that she would give birth to twins, who should be the progenitors of two separate and independent nations; and that the descendants of the younger should be the most powerful, and should finally subdue the descendants of the other. For, as Bishop Newton observes, we have, in the prophecies delivered respecting the sons of Isaac, ample proof, "that these prophecies were not meant so much of single persons as of whole nations descended from them; for what was predicted concerning Esau and Jacob was not verified in themselves, but in their posterity." \* The children were born, "and the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents." (Verse 27.) Their manners, dispositions, and characters were unlike.

About this time a famine which prevailed in Palestine, induced Isaac to go into the land of the Philistines. Here he was exposed to danger, as his father had been, on account of the beauty of his wife. The gracious providence of God interposed, and preserved and delivered him. It is evident from the narrative, that the continued and increasing prosperity of Isaac made him an object of envy to the surrounding chiefs: "The man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great: for he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him." (Gen. xxvi. 13, 14.) But while this exposed him to inconvenience and danger, he was the subject of very special Divine blessing; for the Lord appeared unto him, and confirmed to him, in his own

\* BISHOP NEWTON "On the Prophecies," p. 35.



person, the promises which had been previously made to Abraham on his behalf. Indeed, so powerfully were his neighbours affected by his prosperity, and the manifest blessing which rested upon him, that Abimelech, with his friends, and the chief captain of his army, went to meet Isaac at Gerar, for the purpose of making a covenant with him, candidly saying, "We saw certainly that the Lord was with thee; and we said, Let there be now an oath betwixt us, and let us make a covenant with thee: that thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee." (Verses 28, 29.)

In these circumstances Isaac gradually attained a good old age: his tranquillity was scarcely ever ruffled, except by the contrast exhibited in the dispositions of his sons, and the means taken by Jacob to possess himself of the privileges to which his elder brother seemed justly entitled. This object was at length consummated in a manner which was most unexpected, and distressing to the aged patriarch, he himself being the unconscious instrument of its completion.

Isaac was old, his sight had failed him, and he purposed to transmit the blessing of Abraham to his eldest son Esau. By the artifice of Rebekah, and the skill of Jacob, Isaac was circumvented, and pronounced the blessing upon his younger son, believing him to be the elder. That this was done under special Divine influence, appears to be indubitable; for, when undeceived, although greatly disappointed and distressed, he does not revoke the benediction, but, on the contrary, although he "trembled very exceedingly," he exclaimed, "Yea, and he shall be blessed." (Gen. xxvii. 33.)

On this subject Dr. Hales remarks: "In this transaction all parties were to be blamed: Isaac for endeavouring to set aside the oracle (the express declaration of Jehovah) in favour of his younger son, to which he pointedly alluded in the second clause of his blessing, and especially in the invidious expression, 'thy mother's sons;' the last clause contained the first blessing of Abraham; (Gen. xii. 3;) Esau, for wishing to deprive his brother of the blessing which he had himself relinquished; and Rebekah and Jacob,



for wishing to secure it by fraudulent means, not trusting wholly in the Lord.

“That their principal object, however, was the spiritual blessing, and not the temporal, was shown by the event. For Jacob afterwards revered Esau as his elder brother, and insisted on Esau’s accepting a present from his hand, in token of submission. (Gen. xxxiii. 3—15.) Esau also appears to have possessed himself of his father’s property during Jacob’s long exile.”\*

We meet with nothing of a remarkable character in the latter part of Isaac’s life. Jacob journeyed into Mesopotamia, married, and returned with his family and property; Esau had settled in Mount Seir; when the aged patriarch died, sixteen years after the return of Jacob, and when five years older than his father Abraham was at the time of his decease, and, like him, was buried by the joint devotedness of his two sons.

\* HALE’S “Chronology,” vol. ii. p. 133.



## CHAPTER IX.

## THE RELIGION OF THE POSTDILUVIAN PATRIARCHS.

REVELATIONS made to Noah—Influence of the Dispersion on the Religion of Men—The Book of Job—Divine Omnipotence—Omniscience and Omnipresence—Goodness—Scheme of Redemption—Resurrection of the Dead—Faith of Abraham—The visible Jehovah of the Old Testament the Son of God—Immortality of the Soul, and future Judgment—Existence and Ministry of Angels—The Satan of the Book of Job.

IN discussing the religion of this age, our means of information are so limited, that we shall endeavour to collect the best evidence on the subject from the religious authorities of this time ; although at the hazard of repeating in part what has been previously said of the religion of the antediluvian period.

This course will enable us to furnish the most ample account of an important period of religious history, which has hitherto been very imperfectly investigated.

There can exist no reasonable doubt that Noah's knowledge and practice of religion precisely accorded with the faith of Adam, Abel, and Enoch : his was, in fact, the religion of the antediluvian age ; and with respect to his successors, what we shall have to advance, can only be expected to differ from the account which has been given of the religion of the preceding period in two particulars : First, because we have more details and particulars supplied in the postdiluvian records, and consequently are enabled to give a picture instead of an outline ; and, secondly, because special revelations were made to some individuals during this age, by which they apprehended the Divine purpose in the plan of redemption more clearly than had been previously done.

We know that special revelations were made by God to Noah, although it is not so clear that these announced any



new religious doctrine, or enjoined any duty or practice not previously required. It will, however, be necessary to consider these Divine communications. They are given, Genesis viii. 20—22 ; ix. 1—17. The first feature in these passages relates to the efficacy of sacrifice. “And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord ; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar. And the Lord smelled a sweet savour ; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man’s sake.” (Gen. viii. 20, 21.) These words clearly imply that God was well pleased with the presentation of this sacrifice ; and therefore, that it was offered in accordance with Divine appointment, and through faith in the promised Saviour. Singular as the language, “a sweet-smelling savour,” appears, it affords a curious illustration of this point. Precisely similar language is used by St. Paul in reference to the offering of the Redeemer : “Christ hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour.” (Eph. v. 2.) It is remarkable that the words used by the apostle in the original of this passage, are precisely those found in the Septuagint rendering of the text now under consideration.

The following words of this communication assured Noah and his family, that, to the end of time, this terrible visitation should not be repeated, but that the earth should continue in its course, and seed-time and harvest return, in regular succession, until the end.

“And God blessed Noah and his sons,” and established his covenant with them in terms very nearly the same as those addressed to Adam, with the addition of those assurances which were necessary to guard against any apprehension of another flood.

There is one part of this charter of privileges worthy of special consideration : it gave man liberty to eat animal food, a privilege not included in the communication to Adam. We do not remark on this, considered as a mere temporal licence ; but because there are reasons for believing that it was intended to possess a spiritual import and application.



We have already shown that, in our earliest information respecting animal sacrifice, the blood was to be sacredly devoted to God: this was now also generally required: "But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat." (Gen. ix. 4.) We have also given our reasons for believing that, from the beginning, a part of the animal slain in sacrifice was eaten by the person presenting the oblation; which, as we have endeavoured to show, was done in order to attest, by the nourishment of the body with this food, the efficacy resulting to the soul from the offering of that great Antitype of all sacrifices, the promised Saviour. It does not therefore appear unreasonable to conclude, that this enlarged provision for the sustenance of the body was intended throughout all time to illustrate the great truth, that man is to obtain immortal life through the death of the promised Redeemer.

We have no further light cast on the religious condition of the postdiluvian world for many ages. A new population gradually arose up around the arkite patriarchs; they in succession passed away from the earth; their descendants, preferring another locality, journeyed to Shinar; and there the circumstances which have been detailed respecting the tower and the Dispersion, took place. There can be no doubt that these events, involving, as they did, a great sin against God, must have had a powerful influence on the religion of the period. It therefore becomes important to ascertain the character of religion as experienced by those who continued to worship God in the following ages; and also to investigate the origin and progress of idolatry in the postdiluvian world. We have already shown that, respecting the former interesting inquiry, we may expect to find valuable information in the Book of Job, which, we have no doubt, was intended to supply us with a living picture of religious life as it was seen from the Dispersion to the time of Abraham.

From this source, assisted by other occasional aids, we shall endeavour to supply a correct view of the religion of that age. In doing this we shall not confine ourselves to



the mere letter of doctrines and precepts, but consider them as operating to enlighten the mind and form the character of mankind.

The first element in religion is the knowledge of God. It will therefore greatly aid us in forming a correct judgment on this subject, if we first collect and exhibit what was known in that age concerning the Divine perfections.

It appears that the almighty power of God, and its manifestation on the earth, were fully known and believed.

On this point we have the following sublime passages :  
 “ He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength : who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered ? Which removeth the mountains, and they know not : which overturneth them in his anger. Which shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble. Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not ; and sealeth up the stars. Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea. Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south. Which doeth great things past finding out ; yea, and wonders without number.” (Job ix. 4—10.) “ Unto God would I commit my cause : which doeth great things and unsearchable ; marvellous things without number.” (Chap. v. 8, 9.) “ Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any : he is mighty in strength and wisdom. Behold, God exalteth by his power : who teacheth like him ? Behold, God is great, and we know him not. With God is terrible majesty.” (Chap. xxxvi. 5, 22, 26 ; xxxvii. 22.) But no proof on this subject is so decisive as the frequent application of the term שַׁדְּדַי *Shad-dah'y*, “ Almighty,” to the Divine Being in this book.\* This word occurs forty-eight times in the Hebrew Bible. Of these, thirty-one are in the Book of Job, one in the Divine address to Abraham, and one in the blessing of Isaac

\* We are aware that an objection may be made to this argument, on the ground that this term, strictly taken, means “ all-bountiful,” or “ all-sufficient.” It is, however, uniformly rendered “ Almighty” in the authorized versions ; and, we think, with good reason ; for nothing but almighty power could make Him all-sufficient : and therefore all the translators to whom we have access have rendered the term “ Almighty.” (See PATRICK, on Gen. xvii. 1.)



to Jacob on his leaving his father's house to journey to Padan-aram. The application of this Divine title, therefore, occurs thirty-three times in the period immediately under consideration; a fact which proves that his boundless power and infinite sufficiency were well known, and regarded by those who still worshipped the true God as a fundamental element of their faith.

We have equally distinct testimony borne to the omniscience and omnipresence of God.

“Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him: *but he knoweth the way that I take.*” (Job xxiii. 8—10.) “Shall any teach God knowledge? seeing he judgeth those that are high.” (Chap. xxi. 22.)

We do not, however, principally rely on select passages of Genesis or Job, which explicitly state, in a didactic manner, this or any other doctrine relating to the Divine attributes. These are always open to verbal criticism; and a slight inflection in the rendering of terms from one language into another may injure the soundest argument. We refer, therefore, first to the general scope of the Book of Job. It will be seen that the entire subject of the poem is based upon the doctrine of the Divine omniscience.

In the opening of the book, when the Almighty addresses Satan respecting Job, he not only speaks as one who was perfectly acquainted with the character, conduct, and spirit of the patriarch, but also as knowing all other men, and being therefore well able to make a comparison of all human character: “Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?” (Chap. i. 8.) And also in that sublime address of Jehovah in chapters xxxviii.—xli., we find these attributes, as well as that of omnipotence, claimed and avowed in the fullest manner. The ultimate decision of Jehovah in the case of Job is also in proof. Here is a just discrimination between the conduct and judgment of Job, and that of his friends; a discrimina-



tion which could only have resulted from a perfect knowledge of the conduct and spirit of the parties.

We have precisely similar evidence brought before us in the Book of Genesis. A great number of facts are detailed in connexion with revelations of the Divine character, which will incontestably prove that the clearest views were held of the Divine majesty, power, wisdom, and omnipresence. Let us take as an instance the destruction of Sodom, and especially the conversation of the Lord with Abraham respecting that fearful visitation. We see here the most ample exhibition of omniscience. The Divine Being knew all the iniquities of that wicked people. He claims an infinity of power. Abraham evidently believes that He is possessed of these; and, on the principle that the Divine Eye could select the righteous from the wicked, prefers his ever-memorable prayer on behalf of the devoted city. Nor can it be said, as an answer to this argument, that the account which we possess was communicated by Divine revelation to Moses. However the Jewish lawgiver might have obtained his information of these circumstances, whether by early written records, tradition, or entirely by immediate revelation, it must be admitted, by every believer in the verity of holy scripture, that the conversation to which we have referred actually took place. We cannot regard it in the same light with the poetic conversations of Homer, or the well-imagined speeches reported by Tacitus. Abraham really heard and actually spoke what we read; and therefore the account supplies an ever-living exhibition of the doctrines which the patriarchs believed, and of the views which they entertained.

If this conclusion be sound, then we ask the careful reader to refer to the Book of Job, and to that part of Genesis which details the dealings of Jehovah with the patriarchs from the Flood until the death of Isaac; and we venture to assert, that he will there find displays of those Divine attributes to which we have referred, as sublime as in any other part of sacred scripture. Where is the doctrine of the Divine power more clearly asserted, and more fully received? Where is the wisdom of Jehovah more abundantly dis-



played? The Deity adored by those patriarchs stands out in their creed, practice, and worship, as necessarily invested with all the glorious attributes which Christians ascribe to the eternal God.

Nor were these doctrines received as mere abstract dogmas, or these attributes considered as mere qualities or powers, without any regard to their operation. It was fully known and clearly admitted that God, in the exercise of his wisdom and power, had created the world. Who can read the beginning of the Divine address to Job, without regarding it as a most glorious exhibition of the wisdom and power of God in creation?

“Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner-stone thereof; when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb? when I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling-band for it, and brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors, and said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?” (Job xxxviii. 4—11.)

The people who were conversant with such views of the Divine operations, who could so clearly apprehend the origin of our earth, and the almighty power and wisdom which produced it, must have had little to learn respecting these distinguishing attributes of God; at least in comparison of any subsequent generation of their fellow-men.

We now inquire into the views which were entertained of the Divine goodness, compassion, and love, and the manifestation of these attributes to mankind.

This subject naturally claims our attention to two distinct parts: 1. As it respects the spiritual interests and final destiny of man; and, 2. As it regards God's providential dealings with his creatures in their temporal condition.



1. On the first of these we observe, that these patriarchs were unquestionably in possession of all the gracious promises given to the antediluvian world. The announcement of a Redeemer, and the nature and intention of sacrifice, must have been familiar to them. To what extent they apprehended the Divine purpose in the economy of redemption, and the means by which it was to be carried into effect, we may hereafter inquire ; but it is evident that sin was regarded as a heinous offence against God, meriting not only his displeasure, but insuring punishment ; and also that God had appointed a means by which sin was to be pardoned, and man thus saved from its consequences.

We have a striking exemplification of this in the case of Job. He said, "It may be that my sons have sinned." He therefore "rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all. Thus did Job continually." (Job i. 5.) This fact, of itself, attests the belief of important religious doctrines. It shows that the evil and danger of sin were known ; that God had appointed a means of forgiveness ; and that sacrifice stood prominently connected with this merciful arrangement. This is further confirmed by the facts related in the last chapter of this book : "After the Lord had spoken these words unto Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends : for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt-offering ; and my servant Job shall pray for you : for him will I accept : lest I deal with you after your folly." (Chap. xlii. 7, 8.) The remarks already made respecting the sacrifice of Noah afford further illustration of these doctrines.

The gracious dealings of the Lord with Abraham are a further proof of the knowledge and experience which were possessed, at this period, of the manifestations of the Divine mercy to the souls of men. This indeed is evident from the most general view of the Divine intercourse with



the father of the faithful. What was the object of these communications? Certainly not the personal aggrandizement of Abraham or of his descendants. It was, that in him "all families of the earth might be blessed." (Gen. xii. 3.) They stood immediately connected with the means appointed for carrying into effect the redemption of the world. But, what is more to our purpose, they had an immediate religious effect on the mind of the patriarch. When called to leave his father's house, although he immediately obeyed, and "went out, not knowing whither he went," he did this "by faith," not under the influence of any worldly policy. Hence we are taught, that in this act of obedience he was not influenced by any earthly or temporal motives, but that "he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." He therefore not only lived, but "died, in faith," and received that country which he had sought; God, not being ashamed to be called his God, having prepared for him a city. (Heb. xi. 8—10.)

It may be proper here to observe, that this religious character of Abraham is not a mere opinion, but is derived from the express teaching of holy scripture. It comes to us on the authority of revelation, as a just exhibition of the effect produced on the mind of the patriarch by those gracious interpositions.

We may, however, safely advance a step beyond this. No fact can be more evident to a serious observer, than that the existence of religion in our world has always depended upon the gracious interposition of God. We have heard much of reason, and of its important influence on the maintenance of religious knowledge. But if we carefully consult the history of past ages, we shall find such allegations abundantly refuted by matter of fact. So far as we can ascertain, human reason never formed correct conceptions of God, or of his will, except under the immediate influence of the Holy Ghost. It has not only done nothing for the advancement of religion, unaided by revelation; it has done less than nothing. It has called forth its most mighty



powers, exercised its most lofty intellect, in defending the widest aberrations of impiety and error ; teaching man to renounce the knowledge of his Creator, and to bow down in slavish subjection even to the work of his own hands.

No truth stands out more prominently than this. Wherever we look, in the history of the early ages, we invariably find the pure principles of the patriarchal faith either maintained or vitiated, as we find an obedience to revelation, or a dependence upon human reason, to prevail. In the one case, as in that before us, we see the mind led into a happy acquaintance with the gracious purposes of God ; in the other, “professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts.” (Rom. i. 22—24.)

These Divine interpositions for the maintenance of true religion in the world during this period were as abundant, and (taking all the circumstances into the account) as remarkable, as any with which any age of the world has been favoured.

Let us again refer to the Book of Job, which we regard as a splendid history of Divine interposition to communicate religious knowledge to man, and to maintain the cause of religion in the earth. Here is the case of an Arabian prince or emir, unconnected with any special covenant or promise, but distinguished by his devotedness to God, who, by Divine dispensation, is brought into circumstances of the greatest affliction ; his religious friends gather around him, and discourse respecting the Divine attributes, and the dealings of God with man. In these conversations we have all the prominent features of the Divine character recognised, the immateriality of the soul and future hope of the righteous strikingly portrayed ; and at length Jehovah descends, explains, and justifies himself, and teaches the erring but sincere friends of the patriarch important lessons of wisdom and righteousness. Who can calculate the effect of these



communications upon a large, and perhaps migratory, population?

The case of Abraham is still more remarkable. He is called from Ur of the Chaldees; his father's family emigrate with him to Haran. The Divine character of this call must have been known and understood by all the branches of his household. From thence Abraham is commanded to journey into a strange land; he obeys and travels, accompanied by Lot. His future course is distinguished by yet more remarkable revelations from heaven,—revelations which affect not only himself and his wife, but Lot, Ishmael, Isaac, and the other members of his family. Who does not see that this course of procedure must have had a most important effect in maintaining the knowledge of God, and a reverence for his will, in the world?

The providential dealings of God with mankind during this period must now be considered.

And here we think we may safely say, that in no age of the world was the doctrine of Divine providence more fully taught, or more clearly understood.

As we have already observed, the entire history which the holy scripture affords of the postdiluvian age is a series of interpositions in man's favour; and although the development of the great economy of grace was the ruling idea of all these, they nevertheless extended to the temporal condition of mankind, and even to the most minute, and apparently unimportant, of human affairs.

The whole history of Abraham, and the entire Book of Job, might be cited in proof; but we only refer to the case of Abraham's concern to provide a suitable wife for his son Isaac. Whoever will carefully read the Mosaic narrative of the circumstances arising out of this desire of the aged patriarch, will see in it one of the most brilliant chapters in the record of the providential dealings of Jehovah with mankind. We notice a few prominent points.

In the address of Abraham to his servant, in answer to an objection, he says, "The Lord God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kin-



dred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land ; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence." (Gen. xxiv. 7.) What language can express a stronger assurance of the protection and care of a gracious Providence than this? Nor were this knowledge and reliance confined to Abraham. The aged servant who was sent on this errand, shared in a great degree his master's confidence in God. His prayer at the well is a proof of this. Laban and Bethuel, also, in some measure partook of the same spirit. After hearing the statement of Eliezer, unlike many who profess Christianity in our day, they did not ridicule the professions of Divine direction in this matter, but at once frankly admitted, "The thing proceedeth from the Lord : we cannot speak unto thee bad or good." (Verse 50.) The whole account is a perfect picture of entire reliance upon God, not only in an important affair itself, but also in regard to the various details relating to its accomplishment. It also affords a glorious exhibition of Divine care, watching over the interests of a pious man's family, and overruling all circumstances -to promote the accomplishment of the object which he desired to realize.

We regard circumstances of this kind as of special value ; showing, as they do, not only a belief in the doctrines to which we refer, but the influence which they exercised upon the minds of individuals. These cases also possess another advantage ; their testimony extends, with greater or less force, to all the doctrines which we have considered. The narrative concerning Abraham, Eliezer, and Laban not only affords us important information respecting the doctrine of providence, but it also shows that those parties regarded the Lord as almighty, omniscient, omnipresent, infinitely good, gracious, and merciful. No exhibition of doctrines in a didactic form can make this truth so obvious to common apprehension as the effect produced, when we see them all alike recognised by pious men, and exercising a strong and abiding influence on their sentiments, feelings, and conduct.



It is necessary to ascertain, if possible, to what extent the patriarchs of this period understood the scheme of redemption, and exercised faith in the promised Saviour.

We have already shown that clear and ample light was cast on this subject in the beginning of the world, and that hence Abel and Enoch were saved by faith. It is no less evident that Noah possessed the same knowledge, and exercised a similar faith. But as ages rolled on, and apostasy became prevalent, and mankind were scattered over different parts of the earth, it is important to inquire how far those who adhered to the worship and service of the true God maintained this knowledge uncorrupt, and whether it produced in them the same results.

We may freely confess that we stand on different ground from that occupied by many critics who have written on this subject. Several of these have first determined that such and such doctrines could not have been known in this early age ; and, having settled this point, they proceed to put a meaning on the text of scripture in accordance with their views. This, as Dr. Samuel Lee observes, is not "the business of an interpreter." If, however, we have any temptation of this sort, it lies in another direction. For, while others have regarded spiritual views of the Divine economy as unattainable during this period, the whole of our investigation has shown the extreme probability that the postdiluvian patriarchs must have had some knowledge of a promised Messiah, and have exercised a corresponding faith in him as their Saviour.

We do not, however, intend to bring any strong bias of this kind to influence our decision on this inquiry : although we freely avow that, taking the account of the antediluvian patriarchs as given by Moses, in connexion with the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, we can entertain no reasonable doubt that the population of the postdiluvian world rose up into being under a settled conviction that God had promised to man a Redeemer, who was to save him from the consequences of his sin ; and that, therefore, if we had received no information respecting the



religion of those who lived during this period, the fair and just presumption would have been, that, while many had forsaken God, and lost all idea of his merciful economy by the darkening influence of sin, others, serving and worshipping the true God, would still retain a lively sense of the primitive promise, would still see in the blood of sacrifice a type of the promised Saviour, and be thereby led to exercise faith in him, although but dimly seen, or obscurely apprehended in the mind.

There are, however, some passages of holy writ which convey momentous instruction on this subject. To these we proceed to direct attention.

In the nineteenth chapter of the Book of Job we have this remarkable text:—"O that my words were now written! O that they were printed in a book! that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! For I know *that* my Redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth: and *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; *though* my reins be consumed within me." (Verses 23—27.)

It may be questioned whether any part of holy scripture has occasioned more lengthened and violent controversy than this passage.

Some writers have laboured to show that the reading of our authorized version is not a just rendering of the original; that the terms in the Hebrew do not warrant the belief that Job made any reference to the Redeemer, or to a resurrection from the dead. Those who adopt this view read the passage in the following manner:—

"For I know that my Vindicator liveth,  
And that at length he will appear on the earth,  
And though this, my skin, is thus corroded,  
Yet in my flesh I shall see God;  
Whom I shall see as my Friend,  
And mine eyes shall behold him not estranged from me,  
When I shall have fulfilled all that is appointed for me." \*

\* WEMYS'S "Job and his Times," p. 29.



A great number of arguments have been urged in favour of this reading, the principal of which are, 1. That it adheres more closely to the original, and does not require supplementary words; 2. That it accords with the Septuagint; 3. That any other rendering is unsupported by the general tenor of the book; 4. That had Job believed in the doctrine of the resurrection, he would not have cursed the hour of his birth; 5. That to apply the passage to the Redeemer would be to make Job a prophet, a character which holy scripture does not give him: but the great reason, although not urged directly as such, is evidently this,—that the application of these terms to Christ and the resurrection implies a degree of light ill corresponding with the times in which Job is supposed to have lived.

Several learned men, swayed by these and other reasons, have adopted this mode of interpretation, and, among them, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Grotius, Le Clerc, Michaëlis, Warburton, Father Simon, Geddes, and Bishop Stock. This rendering, it will be perceived, makes the passage refer entirely to the restoration of Job to health and prosperity.

Dr. Kennicott, although agreeing with the preceding interpretation, goes a step beyond this class of commentators, and considers that Job referred to a Divine conviction, which he had just then received, that God would appear in the most evident manner to vindicate his innocence, and give the fullest proof to his friends and to the world that his afflictions had not been sent as a scourge for his iniquities.

A third opinion is, that the patriarch in this passage gives us a noble testimony of his faith in the promised Redeemer, and in the resurrection of the dead. Dr. Mason Good, who adopts this opinion, has given the following translation:—

“ O that my words were even now written down !  
O that they were engraven on a table,  
With a pen of iron, upon lead !  
That they were sculptured in a rock for ever !  
For I KNOW that my REDEEMER liveth,  
And will ascend at last upon the earth :  
And, after disease hath destroyed my skin,  
That, in my flesh, I shall see God :  
Whom I shall see for myself,



And my own eyes shall behold, and not another's,  
Though my reins be consumed within me."

We do not propose to enter into any criticism on the accuracy of either of the translations which we have thus given. We have seen that the former has received the support of learned men, both among ancient and modern writers. The latter has also been defended by critics of the first celebrity, from Jerome among the ancients, to Velthusen, Moldenhawer, Dr. Hales, Dr. Mason Good, Dr. Samuel Lee, and others in modern times.

It is possible that both these opinions have been pressed too far by their respective advocates. It is, however, important to ascertain, at least as far as possible, whether the holy patriarch did refer to a temporal restoration, or had respect to the Messiah and the resurrection. Those who wish to see what can be said in favour of the first, by an elaborate investigation of the terms of the original, may consult Wemys's "Job and his Times;" while the latter opinion is maintained, with equal ability, by Dr. Mason Good and Dr. Samuel Lee. Admitting the question to be open to objection, as to a strict rendering of the original terms, we direct attention to the scope and intention of the writer. He was afflicted and distressed; and we are told that this language was intended to convey a strong expression of confidence that God would appear as his Vindicator, raise him from his degradation and suffering, and make his innocence apparent. It will be seen that this version is not only at variance with the interpretation which gives the passage a supposed reference to the Redeemer, but that it also contravenes the scope of the latter part of the text, so far as it has been regarded as relating to a future resurrection, or a spiritual state of being. The two interpretations stand opposed to each other. We must, therefore, refer to other parts of this conversation for the purpose of ascertaining whether of these views is supported by the general tenor of the sentiments expressed.

We first notice the expression of Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." (Chap. xiii. 15.) It is admit-



ted that this translation has also been questioned ; but, after careful examination, we fully agree with Dr. Samuel Lee, whose rendering of the text is very near that of the authorized version. He reads the passage, “ Were he to slay me, should I not hope ? ” and adds, “ The Masorah, with some copies, reads, ‘ In him will I hope. ’ I prefer the textual reading. The exegetical sense is much the same in either case ; and, unless I am greatly mistaken, clearly indicates in the speaker a belief in a future life. His meaning seems to be : ‘ How could I thus expose myself, how place my life in jeopardy, did I not trust that, though he should slay me, yet would not my hope be cut off ? ’ He adds, as if to confirm this, ‘ *My ways*, ’ that is, religious faith and views, ‘ only will I advance and uphold in this argument, and in his presence ; and my conviction is, that this undertaking shall turn to my salvation, ’ &c. (Compare Heb. xi.) ”

We have therefore gained an important point. This text, as well as that to which we have previously referred, goes to show that Job had no hope of restoration in this life ; and they unite to prove that he regarded himself as sunk so low, as the subject of so much shame, degradation, and disease, that in this world he was without hope. Yet he professes a high and holy hope. “ Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. ” Where ? For what ? Evidently in another world, and for everlasting happiness ; as he observes in the following verse, “ He also shall be my salvation. ”

We refer to another passage on the same subject, which we give in Dr. Mason Good’s translation, and which is as beautiful as it is full of power :—

“ But man dieth, and mouldereth :  
 But the mortal expireth, and where is he ?  
 As the billows pass away with the tides,  
 And the floods are exhausted and dried up,  
 So man lieth down, and riseth not :  
 TILL THE HEAVENS BE DISSOLVED, they will not awake ;  
 No, they will not rouse up from their sleep.  
 O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave,  
 Wouldst conceal me TILL THY WRATH BE PAST ;  
 THAT THOU WOULDST APPOINT ME A FIXED TIME, AND REMEMBER ME.



But, if a man die, shall he indeed live again?  
 All the days of my appointed time will I wait,  
 Till my RENOVATION come.  
 Thou shalt call, and I WILL ANSWER THEE;  
 Thou shalt yearn toward the work of thine hand."

(Chap. xiv. 10—15.)

"This is a very important passage," says Dr. Good, "and is demonstrative of the DOCTRINE of a future state, because it is here fully brought forward, and reasoned upon; but it shows, also, that though the doctrine was at that era in existence, it admitted of debate; and that the speaker himself, under the immediate pressure of suffering, at one moment doubted, and at another was thoroughly convinced." \* We add another passage, which confirms our view of these texts, by speaking plainly of a future judgment. This is clearly enunciated, chap. xxi. 28—30 :—

"For, 'Where,' say ye, 'is the house of this mighty one?  
 Yea, where the first mansion of the wicked?'  
 Lo! against the day of destruction are the wicked reserved;  
 In the day of vengeance shall they be brought forth."

And again, chap. xxxi. 13, 14 :—

"If I have slighted the cause of my man-servant, or my maid-servant,  
 In their controversies with me,  
 What, then, shall I do, when God ascendeth?  
 And when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?"

Dr. Good, alluding to the last text, observes, "The passage cannot be misunderstood, and seems decisive not only of the existence of the doctrine of a future judgment at the era before us, but of the speaker's habitual belief of it, considering that he is now debating coolly and argumentatively, and free from the influence of passion.

"The quotation immediately preceding it may, perhaps, admit of a different interpretation, if considered by itself; yet, as it ought not to be considered by itself, but in conjunction with collateral passages, the proper and intended sense is fixed at once. This quotation is of consequence, not only as leading to a proof of the existence of the doc-

\* DR. MASON GOOD'S "Introductory Dissertation to Job," p. lxxxii.



trine, and the speaker's assent to it, when dispassionately arguing upon the subject, but as ascribing the same assent, as a known and admitted fact, to his companions ; for he puts the words into their mouth, in their own presence.

“Upon the whole, it seems clear, then, I think, that the doctrine of a future existence and state of retribution was fully known at the age in which the Book of Job was composed.” \*

This is the deliberate testimony of a man every way qualified to pronounce an opinion on the subject ; and this opinion acquires a force beyond that which any character can give, by the evidence from which it is elicited. According to this, the reference of Job in these passages to a future judgment and resurrection is clear and ample. And why should this be thought incredible, when it is an admitted fact, that Enoch predicted the final judgment long before the Flood ?

We now direct attention to the other part of the subject. The passage to which we have so particularly referred has been supposed to speak as plainly of the promised Redeemer as of a future resurrection and judgment. It will be necessary to ascertain how far the assertion of this doctrine is borne out by other passages in this portion of holy writ. We first notice chap. vii. 17 : “What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him ? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him ?” When we regard this as the language of inspiration, it gives us a strong impression that the persons who could thus use it, must have had tolerably clear views of the scheme of redemption. For man, regarded as a sinner, (and the party speaking fully admitted this,) could not, apart from redemption, be considered as magnified by the Divine regard,—as being the object upon which Jehovah had set his heart. This passage is evidently imitated in Psalm viii. 4, 5 : “What is man, that thou art mindful of him ? and the son of man, that thou visitest him ? For thou hast made him a little lower than God, (*Elohim*,) and

\* DR. MASON GOOD'S “Introductory Dissertation,” p. lxxxiv.



hast crowned him with glory and honour.” This latter text is quoted in the Epistle to the Hebrews, (ii. 6—9,) and is applied to Christ. Nor is it difficult to perceive the natural and appropriate application of this language. The original promise of a Saviour to our first parents pointed him out as at the same time the Seed of the woman, and the vanquisher of Satan ; while both exhibited man as the superlative object of the Divine regard, in that he was to be thus marvellously delivered from the malice of his spiritual adversaries, while at the same time human nature was made the great instrument by which this deliverance is to be effected.

There is another text (chap. xxxiii. 23, 24) which has an important bearing on this subject. We give Dr. Lee’s translation :—

“ But there is an angel on his part, an Intercessor,—one out of a thousand,—to show unto man his righteousness. And he shall surely be gracious unto him, and shall say, Redeem him from going down to destruction : I have found a ransom.”

On this passage Dr. Lee observes, “ מַלְאָךְ מְלִצֵּחַ ‘an angel, an intercessor.’ About the meaning of the second of these words, there is but little dispute. It is allowed, I believe, on all hands, to signify an interpreter, intercessor, mediator, or the like. It is on the term מְלִצֵּחַ that the great difference of opinion is here found. And, as a particular religious doctrine seems, at least, capable of being extracted from the passage, interpreters have, as their tastes may have led them, written much in favour of their several views. The fairest way of proceeding would perhaps be, to inquire in what sense this term was used in times prior to those of our patriarch ; for in that it would be most probably used in his times and by him. In the first place, then, it occurs both in the singular and plural number ; and is, beyond all doubt, intended to apply to the *angel*, or *angels*, of God, in a sense connected with the religious welfare of good men. (See Gen. xvi. 7—11 ; xxii. 11, 15 ; xxviii. 12, 13 ; xxxi. 11—13 ; xlviii. 16. So also Exod. iii. 2 ; xiv. 19 ; xxiii. 23 ; xxxiii. 2, &c.) And we need not go to



Babylon for this doctrine, as our German friends would have us to do. In the second place, it is occasionally applied to men, but never, as far as I can discover, either before these times or after them, signifying strictly any religious *teacher*, or *teachers*. See the places in the Hebrew Concordances. In many places it signifies 'the Angel Jehovah;' 'the Messenger of the Covenant;' and the 'Leader, Protector, Teacher, and Redeemer of God's people;' as in Gen. xxii. 11; xxxi. 11; xlviii. 16; Exod. xxiii. 20—23; xxxiii. 2; xxxiv. 10. Compare Isai. lxiii. 9; Mal. iii. 1; Job xix. 25, &c. Now, as this term is no where used to signify 'doctor, teacher,' &c., in a religious sense, and as applied to man, it would be forced and unfair to give it that sense here; it would be doing a violence to the passage, which would be perfectly unjustifiable. It cannot, therefore, signify any such teacher here, notwithstanding the unanimity of modern German divines on this point. Nor, for the same reason, can Elihu be meant by it as such teacher. Besides, such an insinuation in him would ill become the modesty and apparent sincerity of his professions; not to insist on the arrogance it would evince in any one, thus directly to enounce his own virtues and dictatorial privileges.

"If, then, this term cannot, according to scripture usage, signify any religious teacher among men, the only alternative we have is to ascribe it to an angel, or messenger, of God. And among beings of this description scripture, from first to last, affords us but one entitled to the term 'Mediator,' and 'Intercessor,' and who is at the same time a teacher of divine things. And as this Mediator is here mentioned in connexion with the doctrines of redemption and atonement, (things with which no other angel ever had any thing to do, and by virtue of which alone man is to be justified and restored to his primitive purity and soundness,) there consequently is but one Being, namely, our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom we fairly can apply it. To him, therefore, I do apply it, in all the latitude which these terms, both here and elsewhere, require." \*

\* DR. SAMUEL LEE'S commentary on the text.



Dr. Hales renders Job xxxiii. 24, thus :—

“ Deliver him from going down to the pit :  
I have found an atonement ;”

and, remarking on this passage, observes, “ The word כַּפָּר (*caphar*) literally signifies ‘a covering,’ and, in a religious sense, ‘an atonement,’ (Exod. xxix. 36 ; Num. xvi. 46,) or ‘propitiation.’ Such was Christ for the sins of the whole world, (1 John ii. 2 ; Rom. iii. 25,) whose precious blood as ‘the Lamb of God,’ virtually sacrificed ‘from the foundation of the world,’ (Rev. xiii. 8,) had a retrospective efficacy to all preceding times, under the patriarchal covenants, as to the future under the Christian. In whom, therefore, ‘God found an atonement for Job’s sins ;’ a transgression which Adam vainly endeavoured to cover, or hide in concealment, and to remedy by his own imperfect contrivance. (Job xxxi. 33.) Such views of the mediatorial scheme of salvation, through the blessed Seed of the woman, in so early an age, and in a Heathen country, are really surprising. But that which subsisted, we learn from apostolical authority, in the following passage of Peter :—

“ ‘Concerning which salvation, the (ancient) prophets inquired and searched diligently ; who prophesied concerning the grace (of the gospel) communicated unto you, (*Gentile* as well as *Jewish* converts,) searching what (time), and what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, pointed out ; when it testified, beforehand, concerning the sufferings, and the ensuing glories, of Christ. To whom it was revealed, that they ministered not unto themselves, but to us, these things,’ or foretold, by Divine inspiration, mysteries, ‘into which angels are desirous to pry.’ (1 Peter i. 10—12.)

“ Among these ancient prophets Job seems to be included by the apostle, by a marked reference, immediately before, to the sufferings of the converts, designed, like those of Job, for the proof of their faith, a proof much more precious than that of gold which perisheth, though proved by fire. (Verse 7. Compare Job xxiii. 10.)”\*

\* HALES’S “Analysis of Ancient Chronology,” vol. ii. p. 88.



Thus we have evidence,—resting not on one or two disputed passages in this book, but on many, which appear to bear a plain and obvious meaning,—that the doctrines of the resurrection, the judgment, and redemption, were clearly recognised and believed. We cannot, therefore, hesitate to read the remarkable passage which we have quoted from the nineteenth chapter, in the sense given by Dr. Mason Good; and we cheerfully adopt and gratefully transcribe his note on that text, as a masterly exhibition of the doctrine under consideration :—

“Such is the noble testimony of faith, which the pious patriarch is so anxious to have recorded in everlasting characters, for the support of those who should hereafter be afflicted like himself. It is a direct and magnanimous reply to the chief argument of his companions, who, in every speech, have insisted that it is the wicked alone who are punished, and that the good in every instance enjoy the favour of the Almighty: it was with this argument that Eliphaz, the first speaker, commenced, and Bildad, the last speaker, closed. The holy patriarch, far from denying the truth of the observation, admits it as a general fact: he asserts that it is the wicked only who are utterly cut off, and perish beneath the indignation of the Most High; that, in the mysterious ways of Providence, the just may also suffer, and, to an inattentive eye, indiscriminately; but that the afflictions of the just are corrections of love and not of anger, that the good man will uniformly be supported under his trials, and at length be triumphantly delivered from them, and his real character be made manifest to all the world. ‘I am persuaded therefore,’ continues he, with holy confidence, and a consciousness of his own innocence, ‘afflicted as I now am, overspread with corrupt sores, reduced to a skeleton, and in the full prospect of dissolution, that the Almighty will not for ever forsake me; that this dying frame shall hereafter be rebuilt; and the mighty Builder, the great Restorer and Redeemer, will hereafter vindicate my integrity, when he shall at last ascend to judgment. And under this persuasion, I long earnestly to



record the triumphal feelings that console me at this moment, upon the most durable marble, as an animating support to succeeding generations :

For I know that my Redeemer liveth,' &c."

We have now to consider the case of Abraham ; a very brief inquiry into whose faith will serve still further to show that these ancient patriarchs had sound and clear views of the doctrine of redemption through a promised Saviour.

We have seen that this patriarch had a spiritual perception of the Divine promises, and apprehended, through them, a hope of heaven, and an interest in its blessedness. As all revelation teaches that this is only realized through Christ, this of itself would be some proof that Abraham had, in the exercise of his faith, a reference to the promised Messiah. But we are not, on this subject, left to inferential evidence. The plain declaration of Jesus Christ places this point beyond the possibility of doubt : "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day : and he saw it, and was glad." (John viii. 56.)

On this text we observe, that, in our translation, there is an evident tautology. If the first clause be rightly rendered, then Abraham is declared to have seen the day of Christ, and, consequently, the second clause is superfluous. An examination of the original terms solves the difficulty. The word, in the first clause of this text, which our translators have rendered "rejoiced," is *ηγαλλιασατο*, and comes from *αγαν*, "very much," and *αλλομαι*, "I leap." And therefore the word is used, as Dr. A. Clarke observes, to intimate that "his soul leaped forward in earnest hope and strong expectation that he might see the incarnation of Jesus Christ." Parkhurst supports this view, and renders the term, "to be transported with desire, to leap forward with joy to meet the object of one's wishes." Dr. Campbell says, "that it cannot mean here 'rejoiced,' but rather signifies 'desired earnestly, wished, longed.'" Whitby has, "vehemently wished." And Wesley accordingly gives the most expressive and succinct translation of the phrase by



the words, "Abraham longed to see my day ; he saw it, and was glad."

This text, therefore, teaches us, that Abraham intensely desired to see the day of Christ, and is thus strikingly corroborative of the application of the passage in the Epistle of Peter, which we have just given from Dr. Hales. When all the circumstances are considered, no doubt can remain that this judgment is just, and that the pious patriarchs of this period, having heard of the gracious promise of redemption, and being taught to rely on the efficacy of the blood of sacrifice, through faith in the coming Saviour, whose person, character, work, sufferings, and triumph were nevertheless greatly obscured by surrounding darkness, intensely desired to see the day of Christ, to have a noon-tide vision of the glorious Person who should thus mysteriously work out for man this great salvation.

This, we are told, was vouchsafed to Abraham : "He saw the day of Christ." He was, through the exercise of faith, and by the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit, enabled to apprehend the true character of the sacrificial offering of Christ.

It may not be possible to exhibit, with perfect accuracy, the precise means by which these convictions were produced on the mind of these holy patriarchs, nor the extent to which this spiritual apprehension of the promised Saviour's atonement stood connected with any prophetic knowledge of the means by which it should be presented to God in the death of the Saviour. There are, however, two or three particulars which here deserve careful attention.

1. Whatever knowledge Abraham possessed on this subject came from Divine revelation. "The word of the Lord came unto Abraham ;" but, whether by immediate revelation, or by faith in Divine communications made to preceding patriarchs by the Spirit of God, the truth which was the guide of his faith was of Divine origin.

2. The several progressive steps in the establishment of God's covenant with Abraham, as explained by the New-



Testament scriptures, will cast light upon the religious character and faith of this period.

“The first engagement in it was that God would ‘greatly bless’ Abraham; which promise, although it comprehended temporal blessings, referred, as we learn from St. Paul, more fully to the blessing of his justification by the imputation of his faith for righteousness, with all the spiritual advantages consequent upon the relation which was thus established between him and God, in time and eternity. The second promise in the covenant was, that he should be ‘the father of many nations;’ which we are also taught by St. Paul to interpret more with reference to his spiritual seed, the followers of that faith whereof cometh justification, than to his natural descendants. ‘That the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to that which is by the law, but that also which is by the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all,’—of all believing Gentiles as well as Jews. The third stipulation in God’s covenant with the patriarch, was the gift to Abraham and to his seed of the land of Canaan; in which the temporal promise was manifestly but the type of the higher promise of a heavenly inheritance. Hence St. Paul says, ‘By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:’ but this faith did respect the fulfilment of the temporal promise; for St. Paul adds, ‘They looked for a city which had foundations, whose builder and maker is God.’ (Heb. xi. 9, 10.) The next promise was, that God would always be ‘a God’ to Abraham, and to his ‘seed after him;’ a promise which is connected with the highest spiritual blessings, such as the remission of our sins, and the sanctification of our nature, as well as with a visible church-state. It is even used to express the felicitous state of the church in heaven. (Rev. xxi. 3.) The final engagement in the Abrahamic covenant was, that in Abraham’s ‘seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed;’ and this blessing, we are expressly taught by St. Paul, was nothing less than the justification of all nations, that is, of all believers in all nations, by faith



in Christ: 'And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen by faith, preached before the gospel to Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they who are of faith, are blessed with believing Abraham: they receive the same blessing,—justification, by the same means,—faith.'\*

It is certain, therefore, that the gracious displays of Divine mercy made to the mind of the father of the faithful were sufficient to afford a satisfactory knowledge of the mediation and atonement of the promised Saviour.

Nor can it be objected to this argument, that we rely on evidence derived from subsequent revelations; for although our exposition of the doctrine is derived from New-Testament revelation, it nevertheless refers to the results which this faith actually wrought in Abraham. He was justified by faith, and is thus by the apostle set forth as a model for all believers. It is undeniable, therefore, that he must have had some knowledge of the Redeemer, and have exercised faith in his atonement.

But there is another branch of this subject, which is calculated to cast further light upon the religion of the period under consideration, and especially upon this part of it. No fact belonging to the theology of the early ages has been more clearly ascertained, or is more fully attested, than this,—that the visible Jehovah of the Old-Testament scriptures was none other than the Son of God. An ample proof of this would require a chapter: we must be satisfied with a very rapid sketch of the most important points.

1. The Jehovah who appeared to the patriarchs was a Divine Person.

This is proved by the fact that he bears the names of Jehovah, God, and other Divine appellations, and that he dwelt among the Israelites as the object of their supreme worship.

When the Angel of the Lord found Hagar in the wilderness, "she called the name of Jehovah that spake unto her,

\* WATSON'S "Institutes," part iv. chap. 3.



Thou God seest me.” (Gen. xvi. 13.) Jehovah appeared unto Abraham in the plains of Mamre. Abraham lifted up his eyes, and three men, three persons in human form, stood by him. One of the three is called Jehovah. “And Jehovah said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?” (Gen. xviii. 17.) Two of the three depart; but He to whom this high appellation is given remains: “But Abraham stood yet before Jehovah.” (Verse 22.) This Jehovah is called by Abraham, in the conversation which followed, “the Judge of all the earth;” and the account of the solemn interview is thus closed by the inspired historian: “The Lord” (Jehovah) “went his way, as soon as he had left off communing with Abraham.” (Verse 33.) And we are afterward told, “Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven.” (Gen. xix. 24.) We have here, therefore, the visible Jehovah, who had talked with Abraham, raining the storm of vengeance from another Jehovah out of heaven, and who was therefore invisible. Appearances of the same Person occur to Isaac and to Jacob: after one of these the latter patriarch exclaims, “I have seen God face to face.” (Gen. xxxii. 30.) The same Jehovah appeared to Moses, gave him his commission, and afterward went before the Israelites in a pillar of fire, and gave them the law from Sinai, amidst terrible displays of his power and majesty. This Jehovah is therefore truly Divine.

2. He is not God the Father.

Holy scripture informs us that “no man hath seen God at any time.” (John i. 18.) Although we may not feel disposed to press the application of this passage universally and absolutely, seeing that, on one occasion, it is said, “Behold, I send an Angel before thee,” &c., (Exod. xxiii. 20,) which warrants the conclusion that this was a direct revelation from the Father; yet it must be evident that the Jehovah who is so often called the Angel, and who therefore was the person *sent*, must be regarded as another. And this was the visible Jehovah of whom we speak. “The Angel of the Lord” appeared to Abraham. The Jehovah



who appeared to him respecting the destruction of Sodom, also appeared as an angel. And it was the Angel of Jehovah from heaven who swore by himself unto Abraham, "In blessing I will bless thee." These are ample proofs that this person, although truly Divine, was not the Father.

3. We have now to show that this Jehovah was the promised Saviour.

We have seen that it was the Angel Jehovah who appeared unto the patriarchs, and gave the law in his own name to the Israelites : he, therefore, was the Person who established the Mosaic economy. The prophet Jeremiah, however, expressly says, that the new covenant with Israel was to be made by the same Person who had made the old : "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah : not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt." (Jer. xxxi. 31, 32.) Here the Angel of Jehovah who brought the Israelites out of Egypt, and gave them their law, is plainly declared to be the author of the new covenant. Yet the apostle Paul assures us that this new covenant is the Christian dispensation ; and it is therefore evident that the Angel of Jehovah is the same with Christ.

The celebrated prediction of Malachi is to the same effect : "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me : and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in : Behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts." (Mal. iii. 1.)

The title, "Lord of the temple," when spoken to Jews concerning their temple, can be applicable to none but God. The words, "Messenger of the covenant," clearly identify Divine Person with the Angel of Jehovah. Yet this prophecy is expressly applied to Christ by St. Mark : "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God ; as it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger



before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.” (Mark i. 1, 2.)

Again : it was the glory of the Angel Jehovah, the resident God of the temple, which Isaiah saw in the vision recorded in the sixth chapter of his prophecy : but the evangelist John declares that, on that occasion, the prophet saw the glory of Christ, and spake of him. Christ, therefore, was the Lord of Hosts, whose glory filled the temple. We quote but one other text : “ See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven : whose voice then shook the earth : but now he hath promised,” &c. (Heb. xii. 25, 26.) The context proves that He that speaketh from heaven is Christ. It is equally clear that the voice which shook the earth, was the voice of him that gave the law ; and this was the Angel of Jehovah. Yet the text declares that it is the same voice : it follows, therefore, that the Angel and Jesus are the same Divine Person.

Nor is this a modern view of this doctrine. It was supported by the most eminent Christian fathers : Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, and many others, might be quoted as corroborating the conclusions to which we have been conducted.\*

This truth will be found to have an important bearing on the religion of the patriarchal age. We may not be able to ascertain the amount of actual revelations made during this period. It may be impossible to plan out a system of its theology. Strong moral evidence of the existence of spiritual views, and of the exercise of saving faith, may be brought forward, which may nevertheless be open to question and cavil, because we have not more ample details of the strictly religious knowledge and character of the age. Still we have the fact which has been elicited,—that the Jehovah who appeared to Adam, pronounced his sentence, and gave him a promise of mercy ; who walked

\* See this subject ably discussed in WATSON'S “ Institutes,” part ii. chap. xi. ; to which valuable work we have been largely indebted.



with Enoch, talked with Noah, made rich displays of himself to Abraham and Isaac, and consoled and strengthened Job in his affliction; was the Lord Jesus Christ, interposing, directing, and governing all things, that the great end of his future mission might be fully and gloriously accomplished. With such a fact before us, can we believe that pious patriarchs, living under the guidance of, and actually conversing with, the Angel of Jehovah, were left in utter ignorance of his mediatorial character? On the contrary, are we not fully prepared for the announcement, "Abraham longed to see my day; he saw it, and was glad?"

The doctrines of the immortality of the soul, and of a future judgment, have been already incidentally discussed. The express teaching of holy scripture assures us that both had been revealed at this period. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews clearly shows that Abraham, in all his journeyings in obedience to the Divine command, had reference to a "heavenly country," and consequently had received and believed the doctrine of the immortality of the soul; while the prophecy of Enoch, iterated by St. Jude, proves that, even in antediluvian times, the judgment was predicted. There are, however, other proofs of these doctrines, to some of which we may briefly allude.

As in many cases the same word is in the Hebrew used indifferently for the soul and animal life, it is difficult, even in passages where it is extremely probable that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is taught or recognised, to *prove* that the terms are rightly apprehended, and that they do not refer to the animal life. We may instance a case or two. The Hebrew word נֶפֶשׁ is used in Gen. ii. 7, where, in the authorized translation, it is rendered "*the breath of life*;" the same word is used in Job xxvi. 4, where it reads, "And whose *spirit* came from thee:" it is also found in Proverbs xx. 27, in which text it is translated, "*The spirit of man*;" and also in Isaiah lvii. 16, where we have, "And *the souls* which I have made."

It is very similar with נְפֻשׁ the Hebrew word generally



used in the Old Testament to signify "soul." For instance: this word, in Gen. ii. 7, is translated, "man became a living *soul*;" and in Exod. xxx. 12, "a ransom for *his soul*;" while, in Joshua xx. 3, it is rendered "that killeth any *person*;" and in Job ii. 6, "but save *his life*." We have, however, notwithstanding this ambiguity of language, the means of showing that the patriarchs of this age had definite views of the doctrine under consideration, and occasionally expressed themselves in language which cannot be mistaken.

In Gen. xxxv. 18, we have the words, "As her soul was in departing," which seem to show that it must have been intended to express the separate and independent existence of the human soul. As Dr. Adam Clarke observes, "Her body did not go away:" and the words cannot be properly applied to "the breath," or "the life," since these can have no separate existence; and therefore, although they may become extinct, they cannot "go away" or "depart." We have a similar use of the same word in Job x. 1, where the patriarch says of himself, "*My soul* is weary of *my life*." Here the original term, translated "soul," is the same as that which is used in the case of Rachel just mentioned. And it must be admitted that the term translated "soul" cannot mean the breath or life of the person: the language clearly shows that the speaker believed himself possessed of an existence independent of the body; hence he speaks in the *bitterness* of his *soul*, and exclaims, "My soul is weary of my life." A similar phraseology is repeated in chap. xii. 10: "In whose hand is the breath of every living creature, and the spirit of all human flesh." \* Does not this discrimination in the use of terms prove the existence of the doctrine of which we are speaking?

There is another form of expression found in the Mosaic writings which leads to the same conclusion. In Gen. xxv. 8, 9, it is said, "Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years;

\* DR. MASON GOOD'S Translation.



and was gathered to his people. And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah." What are we to understand by Abraham being gathered to his people? It could not have referred to the resting-place of his body; for this was in a strange land; Sarah, his wife, alone having been buried in that place. It must therefore refer to the passing of his spirit into the company of those of his pious ancestors, who had found rest in heaven. It appears, then, as the venerable Clarkson has observed on this subject, that "a notion existed among the patriarchs, that there was a soul in man distinct from the body, and that the souls of holy or good men, when their bodies perished on the earth, lived in another state, and that they were rewarded there, and that their reward consisted, as the phrase 'sitting down' implies, in feasting with, or enjoying the company of, the spirits of all the other good and holy men, and servants of God, who had gone before them."

We have now referred to most of the prominent points which it will be necessary for us to discuss. The doctrine of Divine influence on the hearts of mankind, the existence of Divine laws, and the duty of worship, as they have been shown to exist before the Flood, may be presumed to have been known as the duty and privilege of pious persons in this age also. There is, therefore, but one other particular which remains for consideration. It is the proof we have that, at this time, not only was the existence of angels known, but it was believed that the Divine dealings respecting human interests and affairs were principally carried on through their instrumentality. On the general bearing of this truth, as it has been already noticed, we shall not further remark. The question, however, respecting the Satan of the book of Job deserves attention. It has been generally understood by commentators that the Satan mentioned in the first chapter is the same with the devil, the fallen spirit who tempted our first parents to sin, and has ever since gone about "as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." But it has been always apparent that this notion is strangely opposed to the account which we have of



“the sons of God” meeting together in the presence of the Almighty. When we reflect that we have here no poetry, no prophetic vision, but plain historic narration, it seems extremely difficult to believe that an account so given can be intended to teach us that the foul, fallen spirit, the great enemy of God and deceiver of man, is, or was, received into the counsels of the Most High, and permitted to suggest successive trials and afflictions towards one of the most eminent of the servants of God living upon the earth. It must, however, be admitted, at least, that this doctrine is so strange, that we are not only at liberty, but bound, to consider whether the terms of the text, and the general analogy of holy writ, will allow any more consistent interpretation. Mr. Wemys, in his supplementary Illustrations to the Book of Job, p. 276, professes to have done this. He first shows that holy scripture often speaks of God after the manner of men; that therefore we read of his “hand,” and “eye,” and “ear;” that in the same manner he is said to sustain the relations of “Husband,” “Father,” “Shepherd,” “King;” and that, in accordance with this mode of speech, He is here presented to us as sitting in his privy council, where he meets those exalted holy angels, who are specially charged with the accomplishment of his purposes respecting mankind. This author observes: “There can be little doubt that such is the scene presented to us in the first chapter of this book, verses 6, &c. It is the assembling of the privy council of the Most High; the veil which severs the visible from the invisible world is for once drawn up, and we are admitted into the cabinet of the Almighty. That such a council exists, we learn from several passages of scripture, though the subject has not been usually noticed; as, for instance, in chap. xv. 8 of this book, properly rendered thus:—

‘Hast thou been a listener in the privy council of God,  
And drawn away wisdom to thyself?’

Psalm lxxxix. 7:—

‘God is greatly to be feared in the privy council of his holy ones,  
And to be revered by all that are round about him.’



Jeremiah xxiii. 18 :—

‘Who hath stood in the privy council of Jehovah,  
And hath seen and heard the matter  
Or hath listened to and heard his words?’

Daniel vii. 9, 10 : ‘I saw, and the thrones were placed, and the Ancient of days was seated : the council sat, and the books were opened.’

“It is plain that all these expressions are used by the Supreme, Eternal Spirit, in order to adapt himself to human apprehensions, and to render the description more intelligible. ....

“It was in this council, convened for special purposes, that the spirit here called ‘Satan’ presented himself. The others who attended are called ‘the sons of God,’ a term evidently applied to angels in this book, chap. xxxviii. 7. He is plainly one of them ; at least, he is in no way distinguished from the rest except by his name ; and this name has the definite article before it, showing that it is merely an appellative, and not a proper name. He is called ‘the Satan ;’ and as the term ‘Satan’ in Hebrew, like *Διαβολος* in Greek, is a name of office or character, we are not in this place necessitated to understand it of the evil spirit, but of one of the ministering angels, who held the office, in the celestial court, of *public accuser*, or delator, or perhaps of *general inspector* of manners. The whole composition of the poem requires us so to understand it.

“Besides, it would be utterly incongruous to imagine that the enemy of God and man, the impure spirit, should have free and undebarrd access, whenever he chose it, to the Divine presence ; that the Almighty should hold colloquies with him, and condescend to gratify him, especially for the accomplishment of purposes which might appear wholly malignant. Farther, the Epistles of Peter and Jude give us a very different idea of the actual condition of evil spirits, and of course of their chief. According to them, they are cast down into Tartarus, and delivered into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment, even the judgment of the great day. Perhaps, during the period at which Christ



sojourned upon earth, there might be an intentional remission of their sentence, since we find the tempter endeavouring to ensnare our Saviour, and numberless persons possessed by demons, in a manner not heard of in preceding or succeeding ages.

“But, leaving this mysterious subject, there appears among the celestial ministers to be one who holds the office (whether stated or occasional, we cannot say) of being an inspector or censor of human manners, in every part of the family of man, and who carries his reports to the Divine judgment-seat accordingly. For aught we know, instead of one, there may be many such, whose function it is to observe, to report, and to record, the proceedings of men upon earth. That such a one should make his appearance, therefore, at the privy council of God, is no way surprising; and the colloquy that follows, countenances the view we have taken. Inquiry is made of the angel as to his mission, and a particular reference is made to Job, as a perfect character; on which the official accuser suggests some doubts of Job’s integrity. If this functionary shows some distrust in regard to the disinterested nature of Job’s piety, it is only a consequence of the employment with which he was invested. Such an officer is bound, on the one hand, not lightly to condemn those of whose conduct he is called to take the oversight, nor yet to believe too readily in the mere appearances of virtue. God, to put the matter to the fullest test, is pleased to give permission to inflict certain calamities on his servant, on the express reservation that his life should be spared. Let it be observed, that those sufferings to which Job is subsequently exposed, are not only with the permission, but by the express will, of God. On this part of the subject the whole history hinges; all that succeeds is an illustration of it; and the result is, that Job is pronounced upright, and is acquitted of every charge against him; while his friends, who seem to have acted as the instruments of the accusing angel, are blamed and condemned, though afterwards pardoned at Job’s intercession. So that the book not merely exhibits the external picture of the patient sufferings of a



righteous man, but places us behind the scenes, and shows us in what his sufferings first originated.

“If it be objected, that the suspicion of Job harboured by the angel was unjust, and represents the latter in no pleasing light, let it be remembered, that angels are fallible : ‘Even his angels he chargeth with folly,’ as we are told in this very book ; (chap. iv. 18 ;) and, besides, as already remarked, agreeably to the nature of his office, it was the employment of this angelic *censor morum* to detect any thing that might wear to him the semblance of insincerity, or of doubtful piety.

“Again : it is plain that the angel never exceeds his commission in the calamities with which Job was tried, but acts throughout in perfect accordance with the Divine command, and like a minister who simply obeyed the mandates of his sovereign ; a character scarcely attributable to him who is commonly called Satan and Abaddon. Had this last been intended in the history, we should have had some allusion to him in the conclusion of the book, by way of triumph over a malignant adversary ; but nothing of the kind occurs, nor would such triumph be decorous, if we admit the view here taken. The Satan of the book of Job, then, is simply the *recording angel* of God ; a messenger sent forth to examine and discover, to put to the test, and to correct. This accounts also for the intense anxiety of Job to plead his cause before God himself, who, he felt confident, would vindicate his conduct, and deliver him. And so at last God does ; the great Sovereign appears with majesty, appeals to his own stupendous works in answer to the vain reasonings concerning him, and pronounces sentence in Job’s favour, who is restored to prosperity, and amply indemnified for all his sufferings. Thus there is a perfect unity of design throughout the book, which, viewed as a whole, is not only the most ancient, but the most finished, composition now existing.

“Yet it must be remembered, that the scene here presented is not to be considered as a literal history, but rather as a figurative representation of what passes in the interior



of the celestial sanctuary : in condescension to human capacity, the decorum of the scene being evidently borrowed from the custom of oriental kings, surrounded by their ministers of state.

“And though the spirit, called here ‘the public accuser or inspector,’ is represented as inflicting certain sufferings upon Job, yet, throughout the poem, the patriarch’s calamities are uniformly ascribed, both by himself and by his friends, immediately to God ; and for a very good reason,—no human being knew, or was permitted to know, what was passing in the cabinet of Supreme Deity ; and, besides this, whether the matter was known or unknown, all that a monarch transacts, or allows to be transacted, by his ministers or deputies, is justly considered as being transacted by himself, because it emanates from his authority.”\*

We commend this subject to the serious attention of the reader. The exposition of Mr. Wemys is ingenious, and may be correct : if well founded, it certainly obviates a serious difficulty ; but in this case we are not so fully satisfied as to feel at liberty to decide between these conflicting opinions.

It will not be necessary for us to pursue a more extended investigation into the religious character of that period : this part of our task may be closed with the single observation, that, whether we have been successful in our effort to exhibit the religious doctrines prevalent in this age or not, it is indubitable that enough light was manifested to enable pious men to realize the Divine favour, walk in intimate fellowship with God, and give up their lives in unreserved obedience to his will. Throughout all revelation these privileges and blessings are uniformly ascribed to the mediation of the Redeemer, and to the exercise of personal faith in him. Hence it is certain, that, so far as the personal religion of the patriarchs was real, it involved an acquaintance with the great doctrines to which we have referred, and a knowledge of the Saviour in whom these holy men were called to trust.

\* WEMYS’S “Job and his Times.”



## CHAPTER X.

THE RISE OF EMPIRES, AND THE PROGRESS OF  
IDOLATRY.

ANTIQUITY of monarchical Institutions—BABYLON—Dynasty of Nimrod—Arabian Dynasty—ASSYRIA—Its Origin—List of Ctesias—Ninus—Invasion of Babylon—Semiramis—Nynias—CHINA—First Emperors—Hia Dynasty—Transactions of the most important Reigns—Religion—Progress of Idolatry—PERSIA—Mahabad—Paishdaddin Dynasty—Invasion of Zohauk—Intellectual Character of the Persians—Religion—EGYPT—Commencement of the Monarchy—Chronology of leading Events—Shepherd Kings—The Pyramids—Learning, Art, and Science—Religion.

THE origin of monarchical institutions is lost in remote antiquity. From the result of our researches into the subject we are persuaded, that the primitive mode of government was patriarchal. The father exercised authority over his family, and on the same principle the patriarch ruled over his tribe; yet, long before the era of authentic history, personal prowess, aspiring at dominion, broke down these paternal authorities, and established kingly government. As several of those monarchies rose into power and influence prior to the death of Isaac, we shall have to direct our attention to the most prominent of them in succession.

The first of which we read is the usurpation of Nimrod at BABEL. To this we have already referred; we have now to observe the results of his efforts. Strange as it may seem, and seldom as it has been noticed, we are able to subjoin a list of the sovereigns who reigned over this kingdom from the time of Nimrod, until its subversion by the dominant power of Assyria. We will first record these lists of rulers, with the duration of their reigns; and then give some explanation of the authority upon which these data rest.







A SYNCHRONISTI

| Year of the World | SCRIPTURE PATRIARCHS |                                                                                          | BABIT CE.                                                    | Year before Christ |
|-------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 2262              | NOAH                 | Year of the Flood.<br>Noahs Sacrifice<br>The sin of Ham and<br>the prophecy of Noah.     |                                                              | 3245               |
| 2362              |                      |                                                                                          |                                                              | 3145               |
| 2462              |                      |                                                                                          |                                                              | 3045               |
| 2562              |                      | B.C.<br>2895 Death of Noah.<br>The post-diluvian<br>population emigrate<br>from Armenia. |                                                              | 2945               |
| 2662              | SHEM                 |                                                                                          | The post-d<br>lation arri<br>The City an<br>The confusi      | 2845               |
| 2762              | ARPHAXAD             | 2714 Birth of Peleg.<br>2712 Death of Nimrod.                                            | B.C. Kingly<br>2718 ment e<br>by Nu                          | 2745               |
| 2862              | CAINAN               |                                                                                          | 2712 Chomas<br>Porys<br>Nechub<br>Abius<br>Onibal<br>Zinziri | 2645               |
| 2962              | SALAH                |                                                                                          |                                                              | 2545               |
| 3062              | EBER                 |                                                                                          | 2528 Mardoc<br>2483<br>2443 Sisima                           | 2445               |
| 3162              | PELEG                | Job's trial.                                                                             | 2415 Nabius &<br>2378 Paramons<br>2338 Nabon                 | 2345               |
| 3262              | REU                  |                                                                                          | 2313 Belus<br>2258 Babiu                                     | 2245               |
| 3362              | SERUG                | Haran born.                                                                              | 2221 Anebu<br>2183 Chæal                                     | 2145               |
| 3462              | NAHOR                |                                                                                          | 2138 Arbeht.                                                 |                    |
| 3562              | TERAH                | Call of Abraham.<br>War of the Pentapolis.<br>Destruction of Sodom.                      | 2096 Conqu<br>Assyrians                                      | 2045               |
| 3662              | ABRAHAM              | Isaac offered.<br>Jacob & Esau born.                                                     |                                                              | 1945               |
|                   | ISAAC                |                                                                                          |                                                              | 1845               |
|                   |                      |                                                                                          | Enlo                                                         |                    |



## KINGS OF BABYLON.

|                                     |     |   | Years.          |
|-------------------------------------|-----|---|-----------------|
| Nimrod reigned after the Dispersion | ... |   | 6 $\frac{1}{3}$ |
| Chomasbelus                         | —   | — | 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| Porus                               | —   | — | 35              |
| Nichubes                            | —   | — | 43              |
| Nabius                              | —   | — | 48              |
| Oniballus                           | —   | — | 40              |
| Zinzirus                            | —   | — | 46              |
|                                     |     |   | <hr/>           |
|                                     |     |   | 225 years.      |

This is called in the table two hundred and twenty-five years ; but we shall assign reasons for believing the correct term to be one hundred and ninety years.

We are informed that with Zinzirus this dynasty closed, and that he was succeeded by a line of Arabian kings, as follows :—

|                        |     |     | Years. |
|------------------------|-----|-----|--------|
| 1. Mardocentes reigned | ... |     | 45     |
| 2. Marducus            | —   | ... | 40     |
| 3. Sisimordacus        | —   | ... | 28     |
| 4. Nabius              | —   | ... | 37     |
| 5. Paramus             | —   | ... | 40     |
| 6. Nabonadus           | —   | ... | 25     |

These reigns extended over a period of two hundred and fifteen years. With Nabonadus this dynasty terminated.

We are further told that, after the termination of this Arabian dynasty, a third succeeded, said to have been of the tribe of Ham. This included five kings :—

|                  |         |     | Years.     |
|------------------|---------|-----|------------|
| Belus            | reigned | ... | 55         |
| Babius, his son  | —       | ... | 37         |
| Anebis, his son  | —       | ... | 38         |
| Chæalus, his son | —       | ... | 45         |
| Arbelus, his son | —       | ... | 42         |
|                  |         |     | <hr/>      |
|                  |         |     | 217 years. |



The first table is preserved by Syncellus from the works of Berosus. Alexander Polyhistor gives us a similar transcript, only in his version the duration of the dynasty is reduced to one hundred and ninety years, instead of two hundred and twenty-five; making a difference of thirty-five years. We agree with Jackson, who says: "The number of Alexander Polyhistor must be most authentic; and was that of Berosus taken from the Chaldean Annals."\* The reader will observe that the reigns of Nimrod and his son are short; a circumstance easily accounted for, as, in all probability, both were old when they were, according to these chronicles, invested with regal power.

We are not able with any certainty to state the reasons or circumstances which led those who compiled these chronicles to place the commencement of Nimrod's reign about six years before his death. It is certain that, long before this, he was a great and influential ruler. Possibly, however, he was not regarded as a king of Babylon until the Dispersion was fully completed. The chronological arrangement which we have been led to adopt as the most probable, places the death of Nimrod two years after the birth of Peleg.

With respect to the second table, Syncellus, Alexander Polyhistor, and all ancient chronologists agree. Under what circumstances the second and third dynasties obtained dominion over Babylon, we have no information. This, however, forms no reasonable objection against the historical and chronological authority of these accounts. We refer to one circumstance only in proof of this.

Callisthenes, a relation and disciple of Aristotle, who accompanied Alexander the Great on his eastern expedition, was told by the priests of the temple of Belus in Babylon, that they had preserved a series of astronomical calculations, which extended over a space of one thousand nine hundred and three years before that time. Alexander conquered Babylon B.C. 330: these records, therefore, must have begun B.C. 2233. Now, if we fix the era of the commencement of Nimrod's regal government in Babylon at B.C.

\* "Chronological Antiquities," vol. i. p. 235.



2718, then we find that these astronomical calculations commenced during the reign of Babius of the third dynasty. We regard this as strong confirmatory proof of the chronological tables under discussion ; for nothing is more fully acknowledged than the fact, that the Asiatics were in all ages intensely devoted to the computation of genealogies, and the tracing of descents. This being the case, it cannot be considered improbable that records of sovereigns should be preserved two or three centuries before tables of astronomical science were written. On this point Dr. Russell, referring to the opinion of the learned Pezron, observes, "He reminds his readers that Julius Africanus, who compiled his work from the most authentic monuments of antiquity, gave a place in his collection to the Chaldean and Arabian dynasties ; and that Eusebius and Syncellus found no difficulty in recognising these princes as actual sovereigns of ancient Babylon. Polyhistor in like manner makes mention of them in his annals of the Chaldees, which he formed upon the genuine writings of Berosus, of Abydenus, and of Apollodorus. In a word, if we reject the authorities which have been produced for this important fact, and deny that there was a succession of monarchs at Babylon before Ninus subdued the last of the race, and extended the Assyrian power over the land of Nimrod, we shall shake the foundation of all ancient history, and reduce to the insignificance of fiction some of the best-established records of the primeval world." \*

"In the catalogue of the Arabian kings," as Jackson observes, "we have two of the most ancient and famous Babylonian gods, Merodach, Marodach, or Mardach, mentioned Jeremiah iv. 2 ; and Nebo, or rather Nabo, (as Aquila, and Theodotion, and Jerome read it,) Isaiah xlvi. 1. The first of these was no other than the first Arabian king of Babylon, Mardoc-Entes : the second is the fourth Arabian king of Babylon, Nabo, with the Greek termination Nabius. These, after their deaths, were deified and worshipped by the Babylonians and Arabians." †

\* RUSSELL'S "Connexion," vol. ii. p. 39.

† JACKSON'S "Chronological Antiquities," vol. i. p. 236.



Here, then, we have, although but in outline, the earliest postdiluvian national records. According to the chronological arrangement which we have adopted, the recorded date of Nimrod's accession to the throne was three years after the birth of Peleg. And although with respect to such very remote periods it is absurd to pretend to any thing like minute accuracy in dates, this coincidence is remarkable as identifying that event with the era of the Dispersion.

Thus Nimrod established a sovereignty. "And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar." (Gen. x. 10.) Having obtained supremacy at Babel, he extended his government, and built towns in different parts of the land of Shinar. An uninterrupted series of kings occupied his throne for one hundred and ninety years. Then followed an Arabian dynasty, two hundred and fifteen years; and afterward a third dynasty, two hundred and seventeen years. But while this kingdom was rising into consequence and power, the various tribes, scattered by the Dispersion into other districts, were also forming governments, laying the foundations of future nations, and making a similar progress in their political institutions.

ASSYRIA.—In immediate connexion with the usurpation of Nimrod, we are told by the sacred historian, that "out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah, and Resin between Nineveh and Calah: the same is a great city." (Gen. x. 11, 12.) This Asshur, the same record informs us, was the son of Shem, and consequently grandson of Noah. Nothing appears to be more plain than the tenor of this account. It obviously furnishes a clear and consistent statement of the foundation of the Assyrian empire by Asshur, and its progress in the extension of its territory, and by the erection of other important cities. Yet no text has produced more confusion than this. Bochart maintained the idea that it entirely referred to Nimrod, and taught that "he went out of that land into Assyria, and built Nineveh." This interpretation



has been followed by Dr. Hyde, Ninius, Sir William Drummond, and others. But this opinion is clearly a forced construction of the text, and introduces endless confusion into the history of this period. Jackson has so fully elicited and defended the truth on this subject, that we give his argument entire.

“As all the ancients agree that Assyria was called from Asshur, and that he first inhabited that country, there is no reason to think that Nineveh was afterward built by Nimrod. The Hebrew text will not bear the interpretation put upon it by Bochart and Hyde. It should, according to their sense of it, have been, not אשור but *Ashura*, or *Leashur*, אשורה or לאשור and the Greek and Syriac, Latin and Arabic versions, and the Samaritan text, all agree with the Hebrew; and the Greek and Hebrew reading is confirmed by Josephus, who says that Asshur built the city of Nineveh, and that the Assyrians were so called from him. Farther: it is not probable, that the Assyrians should be so called from Asshur, if their first city and metropolis had been built, and their country had been in possession and under the government of Nimrod; and as Asshur, a Semite, would not choose the land of Nimrod, a Chamite, for an habitation; so neither is it likely that, if Nimrod was there before him, Nimrod would have made settlements in the same country, who was of a different language, as is probable, as well as of a different family, from the inhabitants of it. There is not the least reason to think, as is imagined by many learned men, that Nimrod drove Asshur and his people from their first settlements, and took possession of them. There appears not yet, nor for many years afterward, any war to have begun amongst them: and it is plain that all the families descended from Noah intended to have lived together, as long as they could, in the same country, and in one society, if God had permitted them to do so. ....Moreover, the land of Asshur or Assyria, and the land of Nimrod, or Babylonia and Chaldea, are expressly distinguished by the prophet Micah, v. 6. Asshur is there plainly a proper name, as Nimrod is, and their land or country is



represented as being different from each other. And as both these kingdoms were enemies to the Jewish nation, the king of Assyria first carrying ten tribes into captivity, and afterward the king of Babylon the other two tribes, their countries, called the land of Asshur, and the land of Nimrod, from their founders and first possessors, are each distinctly threatened to be laid waste by the sword. It is not, therefore, to be doubted but that Asshur built Nineveh; and called it from *Nin-Neue*, 'the habitation of his son,' or *Ninus*, designing it for the seat of his family and posterity: in like manner as Cain called the city which he built after the name of his son Enoch." \*

We think this argument unanswerable; and have no doubt that Nimrod, although defeated by Divine interposition in his aim at universal sovereignty, having determined to remain at Babel, (which territory of right belonged to the tribe of Shem,) Asshur, a member of the latter family, left his proper inheritance, retired to the banks of the Tigris, there located his family, and began the erection of the metropolis of the Assyrian empire.

Of this empire also we have a copious catalogue of kings, preserved by Ctesias the Greek physician, who compiled his account from the royal archives of the Persian court about B.C. 400.

We give as much of this catalogue as pertains to the present period, with the year before Christ in which each sovereign ascended the throne, according to the arrangement of Dr. Russell. We prefer the authority of the learned author of the "Connexion of sacred and profane History," because he takes the whole list of the Greek physician, and harmonizes the entire account with the history of the period; whereas most other authors take just as much as will suit their purpose, and reject the other parts as of no authority; though it is obvious that the whole must be regarded either an authentic document, or as unworthy of confidence.

\* JACKSON'S "Chronological Antiquities," vol. i. p. 232.



|                      |         | Years. |     | Began B.C. |
|----------------------|---------|--------|-----|------------|
| 1. Ninus             | reigned | ... 52 | ... | 2126       |
| 2. Semiramis         | —       | ... 42 | ... | 2074       |
| 3. Ninyas            | —       | ... 38 | ... | 2034       |
| 4. Arius             | —       | ... 30 | ... | 1994       |
| 5. Aralius           | —       | ... 40 | ... | 1964       |
| 6. Xerxes, or Balæus | —       | ... 30 | ... | 1924       |
| 7. Armanithies       | —       | ... 38 | ... | 1894       |
| 8. Belochus          | —       | ... 35 | ... | 1857       |
| 9. Balæus            | —       | ... 52 | ... | 1821       |

From this table it appears, that the accession of the ninth sovereign, Balæus, took place just sixteen years after the death of Isaac.

After a careful investigation of these records, and of the labours of the most learned and industrious authors who have written respecting them, we do not think it possible to fix with any certainty the precise period when Babylon was conquered by Assyria. It seems agreed that Ninus began to reign B.C. 2126. But it does not follow from this fact that, at this precise date, the third Babylonian line of kings ceased to rule. It seems improbable that he should have overrun the most ancient kingdom in the first year of his reign; nor, when we find that he is said to have reigned fifty-two years, quite as long as any of his successors, are we justified in supposing that he had governed in Assyria before, and that this date was intended to mark the era of the Babylonish conquest. In the compilation of the Synchronistical Table we have therefore placed the termination of Babylonian independence in the thirtieth year of the reign of Ninus. This is confessedly conjectural; but it appears, in our judgment, to be extremely probable. We are well aware that the admission of those three dynasties places the beginning of regal government at Babylon earlier than is generally supposed. But we cannot resist the authority on which they rest; and, if we are correct in supposing that Peleg was thus named because just at that time the earth was divided, it seems likely that the dominion of Nimrod might have been established a few years before. If we com-



pare this with the Septuagint numbers, we find that the complete establishment of Nimrod's kingdom is placed about six years before the birth of Peleg. Although it would be ridiculous to affect any precise accuracy respecting so remote an era, especially where authentic records are so scarce, yet the date here fixed appears as suitable to the circumstances of the case as any other that can be conceived.

In this computation we come into direct collision with Sir William Drummond, who supposes Ninus to have been the son of Nimrod, and to have immediately succeeded him. But in his laboured effort to establish this hypothesis, the learned writer has outraged the text of scripture, and the plainest precepts of ancient history, to an extent which precludes any confidence in his scheme.

Diodorus Siculus has presented us with the fullest information respecting this Assyrian dynasty, so far as the list of Ctesias extends. But he confessedly does not give us the commencement of the dynasty. He observes, "Asia was anciently governed by its own native kings, of whom there is no history extant, either as to any memorable actions they performed, or so much as to their names." But he adds, "Ninus is the first king of Assyria that is recorded in history: he performed many great and noble actions." The Sicilian historian then proceeds to state, that this prince was of a warlike disposition, and ambitious of honour and glory; that he therefore caused the strongest of his young men to be trained to martial exercise, that they might be prepared for toils and dangers of war. Having thus paved the way, he formed an alliance with Arias, king of Arabia. With his assistance, Ninus is said to have invaded Babylonia, "whose inhabitants he easily subdued, and imposed upon them a yearly tribute; but carried away the king with all his children prisoners, and afterwards put them to death." \*

Castor, also, who wrote a chronicle of the Assyrian kings, began with Belus, whom he calls the father of Ninus. Yet,

\* DIODORUS SICULUS, lib. ii. cap. i.



as he was not certain of the length of his reign, he only set down his name, and formed the epoch of his chronology from Ninus his son.

These circumstances, instead of presenting any real difficulty to our receiving the tables of the Greek physician, rather confirm his statement, at least to this extent.

There can be no doubt, as Diodorus and Castor state, that other kings reigned in Assyria before Ninus ; and if learned Europeans had been favoured with access to the royal archives of Nineveh, we might have had all the obscurity removed from this part of the subject ; but that proud city had utterly perished before the Greeks obtained any ascendancy in Upper Asia. Babylon remained the last, as it was the first, depository of learning and power. To the precious records of this city learned Greeks had frequent access ; a circumstance to which we undoubtedly owe the information that we possess respecting these early times. But as Babylon contained no records of Assyrian kings, they supply no authentic information concerning his ancestors.

Hence it is even now uncertain whether Babylon was subdued by Belus the father, or by Ninus the son. The want of authentic information warrants a doubt, whether some important actions of the former may not have been attributed to the latter. However this may be, from the death or deposition of the last of the Arabian kings of Babylon we have a regular series of sovereigns, whose reigns extend over a period of one thousand five hundred and seventy-two years, which brings us down to the time when Nineveh was taken, and the supremacy of Asia was transferred to the Median sovereigns of Ecbatana.

Of Ninus the most extraordinary events are narrated. Not satisfied with subduing Babylonia, he brought under his dominion almost the whole region between India, Egypt, and Bactriana. These accounts, however, must be taken with great limitation. We have them all from Babylonish records or traditions, and in either case there is reason to believe them highly coloured. A great and manifest distinction exists in this respect between the simple records



of names and dates, and those particulars which refer to the size of armies, the splendour of cities, and the extent of conquests. In the first case, there appears to be no motive for exaggeration; in the second, every temptation to it.

It is, however, universally admitted, that Ninus so greatly improved Babylon, that he was afterwards regarded as the second founder of that imperial city. He is also said to have greatly enlarged and beautified Nineveh.

Having effected these objects, Ninus marched into Bactria at the head of a great army. In this war he became acquainted with Semiramis, who afterwards succeeded him in the government of the empire. She is said to have been born at Ascalon, and, like most persons who attained to eminence in ancient times, is reported to have descended from a goddess. After having been miraculously preserved, she was, when young, married to Menon, an officer in the Assyrian army. When Ninus invaded Bactria, Menon accompanied the expedition. The Assyrians, having defeated Oxyartes, the king of this country, and taken several of his cities, finally besieged him in his capital. This city, however, was so favourably situated, and so well defended, that it sustained a long and vigorous siege. During this time Menon sent for his wife, who was a woman of unequalled talent and energy. Carefully marking the progress of the siege, she suggested that the success of the Assyrians was delayed in consequence of their spending all their power against points apparently weak from their position, but which were therefore well defended by the garrison, while those that appeared strong by nature were left in an unguarded state. Semiramis procured a company of vigorous men, who were expert in climbing, and pointed out to them a way by which they made themselves masters of a part of the citadel: this having been made known to the city, and being followed by a general assault, the place was completely reduced. The Assyrian warrior thus became master of the city, in which he found immense treasures.

Ninus, having obtained information of the cause of this



success, at first rewarded Semiramis ; but finding her beauty equal to her talent and spirit, he endeavoured to induce Menon to give her up to him, by large offers of his favour : failing in this, he threatened to put out his eyes, which so alarmed the unhappy officer, that he is said to have killed himself. Immediately after his death, Ninus married this extraordinary woman, and some time afterward she bore him a son, whom he called Ninyas.

Among the circumstances which are supposed to be extravagant and improbable, connected with this part of history, is the manner in which Semiramis is said to have obtained supreme power, according to the accounts supplied by Plutarch. He states, that, having acquired great influence over her husband, she earnestly requested to have the entire government of the empire placed in her hands for the space of five days : her confiding husband at length complied, and all the provinces of the empire were commanded to obey Semiramis. Having previously brought several of the principal officers of the state under her influence, this brief space was occupied to complete her purpose. The result was, that the unhappy Ninus was put to death, and his guilty widow reigned supreme monarch of the empire.

But, whatever means were used by Semiramis to obtain supreme power, there can be no doubt that she sustained it with a capacity and energy seldom equalled by oriental princes, either in ancient or modern times. Her history is certainly handed down to us mixed up with much fable and fiction ; yet there does not appear to be any sound reason for disbelieving the existence of this queen, or that she immortalized her name by great deeds.

Having decided on fixing her court at Babylon, she proceeded to enlarge and beautify that city on a most magnificent scale. The walls, always celebrated for their size and strength ; two most splendid palaces ; an immense lake, with quays, bridges, gates, and sculpture of the most splendid character ; and, above all, the glorious temple of Belus, which is supposed to have been built on the site, and to have been the



completion of the design, of what had been the tower of Nimrod, and which was finished with statues on the top of it ; are all ascribed to her energy, taste, and perseverance.

It is further stated, that, not content with these peaceful achievements, Semiramis carried the terror of her arms into Media, and even to the distant empires of Egypt and Ethiopia ; and that at last, crossing the Indus to invade India, she sustained a severe defeat, and, returning to her capital, soon after died, (or, as some writers say, was murdered,) leaving the empire to her son Ninyas.

Ninyas, inheriting the empire, did not inherit the capacity or energy of his parents. Neglecting the extension or improvement of his kingdom, he retired to his palace, and abandoned himself to sloth and sensuality. One evidence of his good sense, however, has been preserved. It is said, that, foreseeing his manner of life likely to lead to disorder in his kingdom, he adopted the most prudent course of preventing this, and of maintaining allegiance and public security. For this purpose, he had always in his capital a certain number of regular troops furnished every year from the several provinces of his empire, at the expiration of which term they were succeeded by the like number of other troops on the same conditions ; the king placing at the head of them a commander, on whose fidelity he could depend. He contrived this method, that the officers might not have time to gain the affections of the soldiers, and form any conspiracies against him.

After the death of Ninus we are furnished with no particulars of the history of his successors until the time of the Trojan war ; which, being greatly beyond our present limits, must be reserved for a future occasion.

We now turn to the history of CHINA. Here we find records more ancient than any other country can produce. These, although sometimes ridiculed and regarded as fabulous, we consider worthy of attention. We append the tables.



## FIRST EMPERORS OF CHINA.

|                             | B.C. |                            | B.C. |
|-----------------------------|------|----------------------------|------|
| Fo-hee began to reign ..... | 2953 | Ti-ko began to reign ..... | 2436 |
| Shing-nong — .....          | 2838 | Ti-tchee — .....           | 2366 |
| Hoang-tee — .....           | 2698 | Yao — .....                | 2357 |
| Shao-hao — .....            | 2598 | Shun — .....               | 2255 |
| Tchuen-hio — .....          | 2514 |                            |      |

## THE FIRST IMPERIAL DYNASTY.

|                         | B.C. |                              | B.C. |
|-------------------------|------|------------------------------|------|
| Yu began to reign ..... | 2205 | Tee-mang began to reign.. .. | 2014 |
| Tee-kee — .....         | 2197 | Tee-sie — .....              | 1996 |
| Tay-kang — .....        | 2188 | Tee-po-kiang — .....         | 1980 |
| Tchong-chang — .....    | 2159 | Tee-kiong — .....            | 1921 |
| Tay-siang — .....       | 2146 | Tee-kin — .....              | 1900 |
| Han-tsoo — .....        | 2119 | Kong-kia — .....             | 1879 |
| Shao-kang — .....       | 2097 | Tee-kao — .....              | 1848 |
| Tee-shoo — .....        | 2057 | Tee-fa — .....               | 1837 |
| Tee-hoace — .....       | 2040 | Kie or Kooei — .....         | 1818 |

According to the best authors, the period before the reign of Yao must be regarded as the fabulous or heroic age of Chinese history. Jackson conjectures that Fo-hee and Shing-nong were the patriarchs of the tribe which first emigrated to China; and this is probably correct. The first is said to have begun to reign about the time of the birth of Salah. The same learned chronologer supposes Hoang-tee to have been the first emperor. His reign includes the period of the Dispersion. It is therefore likely that the tribe which journeyed to China carried with them traditional accounts, if not records, of their family and chiefs, anterior to the period of the Dispersion. Yet, whatever doubt may rest on the true import of the early annals of this remarkable nation, none can exist respecting its possessing a more remote antiquity and a more early cultivation than any other. Jackson, who fully investigated the subject, asserts, that “the two first parts of this history, which consisted of six books, were wrote not only before the time of Moses, but even before the birth of Abraham, and about the year before Christ 2188.” \*

We freely admit the doubtful character of the accounts

\* JACKSON'S “Chronological Antiquities,” vol. ii. p. 405.



furnished prior to the time of Yao, and, further, that even the events attributed to his reign are often contradictory, although the date of it appears to rest on good authority. There is, however, a question which has been urged with great confidence, as if for the purpose of throwing discredit on this part of the history. "If the inhabitants of China were, as here represented, in such a state at this period, as to require being taught the simplest arts and first duties of life; how is it conceivable, that they had been able, many years before, to make astronomical observations, and obtain so correct a knowledge of the length of the year?" Now, where is the difficulty in conceiving this? Is it admitted that Noah and his sons preserved with them the learning which the antediluvian world had accumulated through a period of two-and-twenty centuries? that the postdiluvian population, with all that they thus possessed, had lived together more than five hundred years? If this was the case, can we wonder that astronomical observations should have been made either at Ararat or Shinar? But it is asked, "If this were the case, why did the Chinese settlers require to be taught the simplest arts, and the first duties of life?" The question admits of an easy solution. An important tribe left Shinar at the period of the Dispersion, and journeyed to China. The distance was great, and, considering that women and children, with all the necessities of life, were included, the time occupied in transit must have been considerable. In all probability a vast number of the company died by the way, and others rose up from childhood to form a large portion of the adult population. In these circumstances they arrive at their destination. The country is to be drained, cultivated, and every thing requisite for settled life to be created. Is it not certain that a people thus situated would need much instruction, even in respect to simple arts and first duties; and is it not as evident that they might have some learned men among them, who had carefully preserved records of learning and science of very considerable antiquity and importance? A thorough examination of the subject, will convince the diligent



reader that the two features which are put forward so prominently, as standing in such obvious opposition, are both found to arise out of the circumstances in which the founders of the kingdom were placed. The cause of all this error appears to be, that authors regard the origin of nations as entirely unconnected with the primitive family, and the light thrown upon the early history of mankind by Divine inspiration.

Another objection has been raised against these early dynasties, on account of the length of the reigns. The History of China in the "Edinburgh Cabinet Library," otherwise a very valuable work, states that the first dawn of authentic history commences with the government of Fo-hee, in 2953 B.C. ; a period which accords sufficiently with the best-established chronologies. But even then the imperfection of the dates is marked by a succession of nine emperors in about seven hundred and fifty years. When will the instructors of our youth believe the Bible, and allow its teaching to exercise its enlightening influence over their minds ? This writer must have adopted the Septuagint chronology ; and therefore, although we have referred to this subject in the Preliminary Dissertation, we place in comparison with these reigns the succession of the patriarchs after the death of Noah who lived contemporaneously. The length of a reign is best represented by the time that a son survives his father. If we adopt this rule, we find that while the first nine Chinese emperors reigned on an average about eighty-three years, the first nine Hebrew patriarchs who died in regular succession exhibit an average of about one hundred and thirty years. If, therefore, the Hebrew annalist had called these princes or kings, what a proof this would have been of extravagance or fable ! Do these writers believe that the longevity so distinctly taught in the Bible was confined to the Hebrew patriarchs ? And if not, why should such unwarrantable doubts be cast on the annals of other countries, referring to the same period, simply because they exhibit an accordance with Bible history ? It should be added, that the succeeding Chinese dynasty



exhibits a line of eighteen emperors in four hundred and forty years, giving an average length of reign of about twenty-four years ; and therefore exhibiting just the same decrease in the term of human life, and exactly at the same time, as is given by Moses.

Another remarkable corroboration of the scripture account is afforded by these annals. We are told that the first intellectual efforts that were put forth after the occupation of this country were “in promoting the useful arts, and creating the first elements of letters and science.”\* Here is a case precisely similar to that of Egypt. We have a people who had a traditional account of the origin of the world very similar to that of Moses ; who believed that the first man was created out of the earth, “and endowed with wonderful knowledge of natural things, and had dominion over all creatures.” They also had records of learning and science, and yet they have now to compile a language and to *create* the first elements of letters and science. Every unprejudiced mind must see in these circumstances undoubted proofs of the miraculous confusion of tongues. They possessed great acquirements ; but God had deprived them of language, and consequently of letters ; and therefore their first effort, on reaching their destination, was to supply this want. The process proves the soundness of this judgment. They first used knotted cords as symbols, then adopted the form of husbandry implements, then the form of birds’ wings, afterwards the forms of worms, roots, herbs, &c.

A few brief references to the transactions of the most important of these reigns, with some notice of the Chinese religion, will conclude this portion of the work.

Fo-hee is said to have built a palace, observed the motions of the stars, ruled men by laws, built walls about towns, and distinguished families by several names : his countrymen called him *Tyen-Tse* ; that is, “son of heaven.”

Hoang-tee was the first who wore a diadem and silk robes.

\* History of China, in the “Edinburgh Cabinet Library,” vol. i. p. 43.



With the assistance of two learned men, he improved the characters used for writing, and brought them into the state in which they have since remained. He invented a compass, which showed the four cardinal points of the heavens. He made roads through his kingdom to facilitate commerce, and had his country measured and divided into provinces. He composed a celestial sphere and calendar ; and found out a method, which is still used, of casting up any sum with a box and balls. He also established a regular system of weights and measures, and introduced the art of dyeing colours. He built bridges over rivers, greatly improved war-like weapons, and invented drums, flutes, organs, and trumpets. He contrived the way of making carts or wag-gons, and trained horses and bullocks to draw them. He divided the year into twelve months, of thirty days each ; and, in the sixty-first year of his reign, with the assistance of a learned astronomer, he formed a cycle of sixty years, in which twenty-two were intercalary, to keep the months in the same signs of the Zodiac, and to reduce the lunisolar year of three hundred and sixty days to the tropical year. Other discoveries might be added in the arts and sciences ; but these will suffice. This encyclopædia of invention, when ascribed to one reign and one prince, fully confirms the general view which we have taken, and which is confirmed by all antiquity ; namely, that in all the primitive nations which were founded immediately on the Dispersion, it was the first care of the ruling powers to collect together the scattered fragments of science and art which had been nearly forgotten by the people during their unsettled and wandering life, and to bring into operation those intellectual aids which had long before been experienced and enjoyed. If any proof of this is wanted, we have it in one feature of the preceding case. Hoang-tee is said to have introduced the year of twelve months, of thirty days each. Now, we know that this was precisely the kind of computation used by Noah. Here, then, was no discovery, but a revival of knowledge, as there can be no doubt was the fact in every other instance. There is one more feature which



merits attention. Among the discoveries ascribed to this prince, it is said that, having established the principles upon which a complete organ might be constructed, he drew from the models upon which he formed his weights and measures ; a reference which indicates a depth of research, and an extent of knowledge, worthy of notice in any age.

We have nothing further of particular interest throughout the remainder of this dynasty, which continued to the end to exercise, more or less, the elective principle in the appointment of the successive sovereigns.

With the accession of Yu of the *Hia* dynasty, the throne became hereditary. The national annals, too, assume a more regular and authentic shape. Public events are given in fuller detail, although they, on the whole, exhibit a diminution of interest. Yu acquired lasting veneration : he died after a reign of eight years.

The second prince, neglecting his duty, and devoting himself to pleasure, was removed, and his brother enthroned in his stead. Tay-kang reigned thirteen years, and was succeeded by his son. Tay-siang was mild and amiable, but deficient in vigour, and was at last defeated and slain by a rebel minister. Han-tsoo, a participator in this treason, next ascended the throne. Shoo-kang, an infant son of Tay-kang, who had been born in obscurity after his father's death, ultimately succeeded in obtaining the throne.

The government appears to have been administered with great wisdom and spirit during the reigns of this sovereign and of his son ; but their successors often gave themselves to licentious pleasures. This was particularly the case with the last of this dynasty. The excesses which are reported of him and of his wife, are almost beyond credibility. The outraged feelings of the people at length called one of the local governors to restore the empire to reason and decorum. He succeeded ; and the infamous monarch, being defeated, fled to a corner of the kingdom, where he died, three years afterwards, universally despised and deserted.

These two dynasties extended from about the time of the Dispersion, to the death of Isaac.



We have now to notice the religion of China during this age.

The primitive faith of this people appears to have been strictly that of the scripture patriarchs. It is presented to us with some admixture of error and superstition ; and yet this was of very limited extent, at least during the period immediately under our consideration.

They worshipped the one Supreme Spirit, or God of heaven and earth, with solemn sacrifices and prayers ; in the offering of which the emperor himself, as the great patriarch of his people, presided as high priest, as he does at this day.

They also believed in the existence and immortality of the soul, and in a state of happiness after death. It was the doctrine of their most ancient classical book, Xu-kim, that the souls of the righteous and good men did not die, but after the death of the body returned to God and resided in heaven, and there interceded with Him for their families and posterity, of whose behaviour and affairs they were believed to be cognisant : therefore, at meals and festivals, they made libations to them before they ate or drank.

The Chinese had also very anciently a notion of other spiritual beings besides the Supreme God, who, they believed, by his appointment, presided over the several parts of the earth, mountains, rivers, and cities. Among these subordinate spirits they worshipped six of the principal, who resided in the stars and planets, and to whom they offered an inferior kind of sacrifices. These spirits they believed to be pure, incorporeal beings, and free from human passions ; and ministers of Xang-ti, or the Supreme God : it was also permitted to the inferior magistrates to perform religious services and offer sacrifices to them ; yet none but the emperor himself was allowed to offer sacrifices to the Supreme God, whose worship alone was the established religion of China.

Although the inferior magistrates were allowed to consecrate temples, and to offer sacrifices and prayers to the inferior tutelary spirits, whom from all antiquity the Chinese worshipped, and believed to be the ministers of Divine Providence, and to have power from God to do good to pious and



righteous men, and to punish evil and wicked men ; yet they were not allowed to make any image, either of the Supreme God or of the inferior ministering spirits.\*

Acting on these principles, we are told that Fo-hee, the first emperor, offered sacrifices of six sorts of animals kept for that end ; twice a year, at the two solstices, to the Supreme Spirit of heaven and earth. It is added, that his people called Fo-hee "the Son of Heaven."

Shing-nong, the second emperor, added two other annual sacrifices, which were offered at the two equinoxes ; that in the spring, to implore a blessing on the fruits of the earth ; and that in the autumn, after harvest, to offer the first-fruits to God.

We learn that Hong-tee, during his reign, having fixed his imperial residence at Cho-tong in the province of Pekin, built a temple of peace there, which he dedicated to the Supreme God, and presented sacrifices to him in it, which before were offered in the open air.

We see, in these notices of the primitive religion of China, a perfect accordance with the testimony of holy scripture. They contain proofs that the existence of a Supreme God, the immateriality and immortality of the soul, the final reward of good men in heaven, and the efficacy of atonement through sacrifice, were doctrines fully recognised and acted upon. It is also clear that the people of this country, at the time we are reviewing, believed in the existence of angels, and were tainted with some of that superstition which, Maimonides says, led to idolatry in antediluvian times ; namely, the supposition that angel-powers were connected with, and exhibited to mankind by, stars and planets. And although, during the whole of this period, the Chinese may be regarded as free from gross idolatry, it is, nevertheless, sufficiently manifest that the offering of sacrifices to angels, and pouring out libations to deceased ancestors, would soon produce this result. We have, in fact, every evidence of the quiet, but steady, progress of this great evil. We allude to

\* JACKSON'S "Chronological Antiquities," vol. ii. p. 416.



one instance : Fo-hee, soon after his death, was called, as we have seen, "the Son of Heaven ;" a near approach in sense to the Baal of Central and Western Asia.

Yet, so far as our investigations have extended, to China belongs the great distinction of having first raised a temple for the worship of God. This was built in the time of Hoang-tee, who began to reign, according to Jackson, B.C. 2438 ; but, according to M. De Guignes, 2698. The first of these dates would place the event in the time of Reu, the second in the days of Peleg : either would carry us many centuries beyond the time of Abraham, who worshipped under an oak.

The corroboration which the character and science of this age afford to the views that we have generally maintained, is worthy of notice.

The annals of ancient IRAN, or PERSIA, must now be considered. This country possesses special claims on our attention. It rose into political importance in the early ages of the world ; stood intimately connected with the elect people of Jehovah during the most eventful period of their history ; placed in trembling jeopardy the fate of Greece in the infancy of her career ; and finally, by its ruin, immortalized the greatest military genius which the world had ever seen.

Yet the early history of this people is as obscure as it is interesting and important. Sir William Jones, writing on this subject, divides it into three parts,—the "dark and fabulous, the heroic and poetical, and the historical." The first respects the history of Mahabad, and the earliest race of mankind. There can be no doubt that this portion respects the antediluvian age, and the period immediately succeeding the Flood. Of this era it is said, that Mahabad, aided by Divine power, instructed mankind in many of the useful arts, and introduced among them the blessings of civilization. He had thirteen successors, who were deemed prophets, and were at once the high-priests and monarchs of the country. During their reigns, the world enjoyed a golden age, which, however, was disturbed by the abdication



of Azer-abad, the last of the Mahabadian dynasty ; when his subjects, left to the free indulgence of their passions, without law or restraint, luxuriated in every species of excess. In the hyperbolical language of the Dabistan, "the mills from which men were fed were turned by the torrents of blood which flowed from the veins of their brethren ; the human race became as beasts of prey, and returned to their former abode in caverns and mountains. From this state of anarchy and desolation they were delivered by Jy-affram, who revived the neglected laws and institutions of Mahabad. The human race is afterward described as having again fallen into such excess of wickedness, that God made their mutual animosity the means of Divine vengeance, till they became nearly extinct ; and the few that remained had retired to the woods and rocks." This statement is indeed sufficiently "dark and fabulous." Yet it is easy, amid all its poetry and extravagance, to recognise the prominent circumstances of the early ages of the world. Here is depicted the first man divinely instructed, communicating knowledge to his descendants ; a succession of persons follow him, thirteen individuals, precisely the number of generations from Adam to the Flood, according to the Puranas. These are regarded as prophets, and for a time mankind is preserved in peaceful order ; but degeneracy begins and progresses. The world is filled with violence. There is then another improvement : the laws and institutions of Mahabad are enforced ; but the people again relapse into wickedness, and sin brings down the Divine vengeance ; and the Dispersion, while it scatters the several tribes to various localities, necessarily produces a thin population, and in many cases great degeneracy, and even barbarism.

At this point the Paishdaddin dynasty arose, which is described by Sir William Jones as the heroic and poetical period. This is the portion which coincides with that now under investigation. But although we have the names of these sovereigns, and the time when they severally wielded the sceptre, it is extremely difficult to decide on the exact era in which they lived. The authors of the "Universal History,"



though they give a full account of these reigns, do not venture on any chronological arrangement. Sir John Malcolm pursues the same course. Sir William Drummond, by identifying Zohauk with Ninus or Nimrod, suggests a valuable hint; but the other parts of his scheme are inadmissible; while Dr. Hales, who has rendered us most essential aid on many occasions, here presents a plan equally objectionable. His rectification of the entire list, on the supposed similarity of the names Hushang and Chedorlaomer, in connexion with his striking out twelve kings from the list of Ctesias as fabulous, and retaining the remaining part of the same list as of good authority, appears to be so arbitrary, not to say reckless, that we cannot be guided by its results. Dr. Russell has investigated the subject with his usual judgment; and it is to be wished that he had more fully exhibited the true chronological position of this Persian dynasty.

We supply this as far as we are able:—

FIRST DYNASTY OF PERSIAN KINGS.

|                  |         | Years.   |     | Began B.C. |
|------------------|---------|----------|-----|------------|
| Kaiomars         | reigned | } ... 70 | ... | 2253       |
| Siamek           | —       |          |     |            |
| Kaiomars again   | —       |          |     |            |
| Hushang          | —       | ... 50   | ... | 2183       |
| Tahmurs          | —       | ... 30   | ... | 2133       |
| Gemshid          | —       | ... 30   | ... | 2103       |
| Zohauk or Ninus* | —       | ...      | ... | 2073       |

We proceed to notice the principal actions ascribed to these kings, and to vindicate this arrangement.

Kaiomars is by the best Persian writers said to be a descendant of Aram, the son of Shem. He was called to the throne by the voice of the people, who, feeling the evil consequences of anarchy, and finding that liberty could not be enjoyed where every one was free to do what he pleased, resolved to elect one person, who should be obeyed by all,

\* He conquered Persia, which for one thousand and eight years continued subject to Assyria.



and to whose judgment they would all submit. On account of his great virtues, Kaiomars was elected to this office, and invested with royal dignity. This elevation had a proper effect on the mind of the new king. He appointed courts of justice, taught men to build houses and live in villages, and invented and promoted various manufactures. Having thus provided for the protection and comfort of his people, neighbouring clans put themselves under his government, and thus his kingdom increased in strength and extent.

His eldest son Nazek being slain by robbers, he at length committed the government to his grandson Siamek; but this prince being soon after killed in a battle which was fought with some rebellious subjects, the aged Kaiomars again resumed the sceptre, and reigned thirty years afterward. He was succeeded by Hushang. This prince was renowned for justice and wisdom; and the appellation *Pischdad*, "the just," which was conferred on him on this account, was applied to the whole dynasty. He is reported to have founded some noble cities, and invented many useful arts. He is also said to have first elicited fire by the collision of stones, which element he commanded to be devoted to the service of God, and to be preserved with care in a temple. He reigned forty years.

Tahmurs, the son of the preceding king, succeeded him in the government. Finding the kingdom greatly impoverished, he exerted himself in repressing disorder, and in raising the country to a state of peace and security. He fortified the frontiers of the kingdom, and is said to have been the first prince who employed a vizier, or prime minister. It should be here observed, that both this sovereign and his predecessor are celebrated in oriental annals as remarkable for successful conflicts with demon enemies. The accounts of these wars are invested with every fairy-land extravagance. *Peris*, (or friendly demons,) *deves*, (or malignant ones,) giants, magicians, enchantments, and charms, are abundant and prominent. On account of his success in his wars with these foes, Tahmurs was called the *deve-bund*, or "magician-binder."



Although it may not be easy to strip off this poetry and fable, and reduce these statements to simple history, it is not difficult to ascertain the key to all this romance. It is well known that in the east, especially among the ancients, superior knowledge was considered a certain indication of some special connexion with the spiritual world: and it is confessed that some of the captives taken in this war redeemed their lives by teaching Tahmurs and his people to read and write.\* After reigning, with great reputation, thirty years, he died, and left the sceptre to his nephew.

Gemshid succeeded to the throne of his uncle. He is celebrated as the founder of Persepolis, which to this day is called Tukht-e-Gemshid, or "the throne of Gemshid."† He divided his subjects into three classes,—soldiers, husbandmen, and artificers. He also corrected the Calendar, and instituted the festival *Neuruzh*, or "New Year," at the vernal equinox, which lasted six days. In his reign astronomy was cultivated, and wise and learned men were entertained and protected at his court. He ruled with great success and celebrity, until, intoxicated with power, he proclaimed himself a god, and directed his statues to be multiplied, that the Persians might adore the image of their king. This disgusted his subjects, who became, in consequence, greatly disaffected towards him; which encouraged Zohauk, a neighbouring sovereign, to invade his country. The unfortunate Gemshid fled before the conqueror; but, after the most desperate efforts to escape from his implacable enemy, he was at length taken, conducted to the presence of Zohauk, and condemned to a cruel death.

Zohauk succeeded to the throne, or rather Persia ceased to be an independent monarchy.

Historians give the most conflicting accounts of this event. Some say that this prince was a Syrian; others, an Arabian, although sprung from the race of Kaiomars; while a third class maintain that he was Nimrod, the son of Cush. There is, however, one circumstance which must not be overlooked:

\* *Zeenut-ul-Taurikh*, quoted in MALCOLM'S "History of Persia," vol. i. p. 15.

† *Ibid.* p. 16.



he is said to have reigned one thousand years ; which is in itself sufficient to annihilate the historical character of the account. This hyperbolical statement does not stand alone. Sir John Malcolm asserts, that "the whole of Zohauk's history is a fable;" \* and Sir William Drummond agrees that "the history of Zohauk, as related by the Persians, is full of fables." † There must be a reason for this : the events of the preceding reigns are narrated in the language of common sense ; we have a regular and circumstantial account, which cannot be misunderstood. Why, then, should all this ambiguity be thrown over this particular reign ? The reason is obvious ; and the discrepancy and confusion which are found in the several accounts point out the key of this historical enigma. The prince who is here called Zohauk was a foreign sovereign, who invaded and subdued Persia. Under the dominion of this power it remained for about a thousand years. After the Persian empire had not only achieved independence, but obtained supremacy in Asia, the national vanity could not brook the idea of having the conquest of their country, and its subjection to a foreign power, recorded in its annals. They therefore represented this prince as a brutal and sanguinary ruler, and placed the whole period of their vassalage under his immediate reign. Upon this point, the opinion of Sir William Drummond is important and decisive. He says that, "according to the best authenticated accounts, Zohauk was the Assyrian monarch (whether Nimrod or Ninus) who conquered Iran, and who usurped the throne of Jemshed, called *Onuartes*, or 'great king,' by the Greeks." Nothing but the confusion which this learned author has introduced into his investigations, by supposing Ninus and Nimrod to be the same individual, prevents him from giving a correct and consistent account of the entire facts of this portion of history. Yet this, embarrassing as it was, did not prevent him from admitting the truth which we have just elicited. "I can have no hesitation," he observes, "in supposing,

\* "History of Persia," vol. i. p. 19, note.

† *Origines*, vol. i. p. 379.



with several authors who have preceded me, that by this reign the Persians intended to indicate the period during which their country was governed by the monarchs of Assyria. But Persian vanity scarcely acknowledges that Iran was ever submitted to a foreign yoke. It is allowed, indeed, that Zohauk was a stranger; but he had claims, it is said, to the crown, as descended from an Iranian family, and as sprung from the blood royal of Kaiomarth himself." \*

If our limits would allow an extended investigation of this subject, there is much valuable matter which might be adduced; but we cannot hope to set the question at rest. The problem is one of many, presented in ancient history, which, for want of sufficient data, are indeterminate, and therefore incapable of any thing but a probable solution. As such, however, we suggest the notion which has been just thrown out; namely, that the reign of Zohauk, in the Persian annals, is to be taken as indicating the subjection of Iran to the Assyrian government. If, however, the statements which we have considered lead us to this opinion, it is greatly strengthened by other considerations. It is on all hands admitted, that this was an invasion of Persia, a subjugation of the kingdom to a foreign prince. It is also agreed, that this prince was an Assyrian, or a Syrian; for anciently the terms were used indifferently. We have also seen that this event took place B.C. 2073. When we take into connexion with these facts the circumstance already mentioned, that Ninus, sovereign of Assyria, subdued the neighbouring kingdom of Babylon, B.C. 2096, and pursued a career of aggression and conquest until his death, which took place B.C. 2074, the result to which we have been conducted is invested with great probability. This is enhanced by the fact, that Sir William Drummond, after an elaborate investigation, has seen reason to identify Zohauk with Ninus; a conclusion which would have entitled him to our gratitude, had he not doubly confounded the confusion

\* *Origines*, vol. i. p. 380.



of this part of history, by maintaining the absurd hypothesis that Ninus, king of Assyria, was the same with Nimrod, the founder of Babylon.

A sober and rational review of the whole subject, therefore, confirms the supposition that at this time Persia, with other contemporary kingdoms, fell under the dominion of Assyria.

When we turn our attention to the intellectual character of the Persians during this period, we find, as far as the limited information handed down to us on this subject extends, a striking similarity to that which we have elicited respecting other ancient empires : the same singular mixture of civilization and barbarism ; the same evidence of individual cultivation in juxta-position with great popular ignorance.

Kaiomars exerted himself to civilize his subjects, who appear to have generally degenerated into barbarism ; and his efforts to establish the supremacy of just laws were so successful, that, although many of the people rebelled against his authority, and caused him great danger and difficulty, they were sufficient to have immortalized his name. Hushang, who succeeded Kaiomars, is also renowned for his wisdom and justice. He likewise founded noble cities, taught many useful arts, and is celebrated as the first who constructed aqueducts ; besides all this, he is supposed to have been an author,—a work of some merit, on eternal wisdom, being ascribed to him.\*

In the reign of Gemshid, arrangements are said to have been made which sufficiently attest the intellectual position of the Persian people at that time. The four classes into which the population was divided, were composed, first, “of learned and pious men, devoted to the worship of God ; and the duty assigned to them was to make known to others what was lawful, and what otherwise. The second were writers, whose employment was to keep the records and accounts of the state ; the third, soldiers, who were directed

\* SIR JOHN MALCOLM'S “History of Persia,” vol. i. p. 14.



to occupy themselves in military exercises, that they might be fitted for war. The fourth class were artificers, husbandmen, and tradesmen. Gemshid also introduced the solar year, and ordered the first day of it, when the sun entered into Aries, to be celebrated by a splendid festival." \* These institutions are utterly inapplicable to a barbarous age or people: they indicate the existence of religion, science, civilization, and the general prevalence of knowledge. We are further informed, by the historian of Persia, that, although the authorities which give the history of Gemshid make no mention of Mahabad, yet, according to the *Dabistan*, the institutions of Gemshid were only a revival of those of the primitive lawgiver,—either Adam or Noah.†

The religion of this age and nation must now be considered.

On this subject an intelligent historian observes: "No religion, except that of the Jews, has experienced so little change in doctrine or in ritual as that of the ancient Persians. Originating in an age when history is lost in fable, and propagated by a succession of lawgivers, of whom little except the names remain, we find it the same as the faith professed by a long series of brilliant dynasties.

"The worship of the host of heaven was the earliest deviation from pure religion; the first step towards adopting a visible object of adoration instead of the unseen and inscrutable Being, of whose existence there is a witness in every heart; and such, doubtless, was the Sabian ritual, the earliest religion of the Magi. The substitution of fire, the essence of light, in a form which might be constantly present, for the celestial bodies, is another and not an unnatural gradation in the progress of idolatry." ‡

The worship of fire is, by the Persian writers, particularly Ferdusi, attributed to the reign of Hushang. The reader will instantly recognise the similarity which exists between this statement and that of Sanchoniatho, respecting the

\* MALCOLM'S "History of Persia," vol. i. p. 17.

† *Ibid.* note.

‡ FRASER'S "History of Persia," in the "Edinburgh Cabinet Library," p. 142.



progress of idolatry in antediluvian times. Whatever may be thought of the authenticity of this account, no doubt can exist of the antiquity of fire-worship in Persia. We see no reason to doubt that this second step in the progress of idolatry might have taken place at the period here specified, —during the reign of the third monarch of the Paishdaddin line of kings.

We are told that, in the following reign, another and fearful stride was taken in the direction of idolatrous degeneracy. “We learn, from the same author who records these events, that the worship of idols was first introduced under this prince,” (Tahmurs,) “and the account of its origin appears very natural. A malignant disease had raged for so long a time in Persia, that men, distracted at losing many of their dearest friends and relations, desired to preserve the memory of them by busts and images, which they kept in their houses, as some consolation under their affliction. These images were transmitted to a posterity by whom they were still more venerated ; and, in the course of time, the memorials of tender regard were elevated into objects of adoration.” \* This, it will be observed, does not state that the grosser form of idolatry prevailed at the time, but rather that the seed was then sown which ultimately produced such a result.

The following reign of Gemshid affords a striking commentary on the downward course of idolatry. This monarch, we are told, proclaimed himself a deity, directing his statues to be multiplied, that the Persians might adore the image of their king, as the dispenser of all earthly good. This proclamation was the climax of idolatrous infamy. Yet it is only just to observe, that the people were not prepared for this compound of wickedness and folly presented to them by their ruler : it cost the king his crown and his life, and the nation its independence.

But, while these facts show the progress of idolatry, they do not exhibit the religious opinions which prevailed, and

\* MALCOLM'S “History of Persia,” vol. i. p. 15.



concerning which we have no direct evidence. Our only means of obtaining information is to refer to the tenets of the Magi subsequent to the first Zoroaster, and thence to elicit those primitive doctrines which obtained in the earliest ages of the nation. Nor is this course so uncertain as might be at first supposed. The character of the age and nation was that of religious degeneracy: we have not the slightest evidence of the revelation or revival of any divinely-authenticated religious doctrines. When, therefore, we examine the system of Zoroaster, it is comparatively easy to separate primitive truth from superstitious adulteration; and although it may be difficult, or perhaps impossible, to mark the precise times in which the error was first received, there can be no doubt that the truth was known from the beginning.

Proceeding on these data, we subjoin a few of the prominent doctrines.

The ancient Persians, then, believed that religious truth was communicated by Divine inspiration. In the ages to which we have just referred, this tenet is principally applied to the Zendavesta; but there can be no doubt that it had equal reference to the religious truth communicated in preceding times.

They also held, as one of their principal religious doctrines, a belief in one God, all-powerful, all-good, beneficent, merciful, and just, who was supposed to be the Creator of all things. After the time of Zoroaster, it was believed that this incomprehensible Being is the author of the two great active powers of the universe,—Ormuzd (the principle of all good), Ahriman (the principle of all evil). When it is known that this latter intelligence is represented as a power originally good, but who, like Lucifer, fell from that high estate through rebellion and disobedience, and who, on account of his evil character, was by the great Ruler of events condemned to dwell in darkness, there can be no doubt of our having here a proof that the doctrine of Satan's fall and evil agency on mankind was known and believed by the ancient Persians.



It is equally apparent that the existence of good and evil angels was fully known. In fact, the entire system of *deeves* and *ferohers*, with all the mysterious recitals of their influence and agency, are but perversions of this doctrine.

Another dogma of this creed, and indeed one of the most remarkable, respects Mythra, the mediator between Ormuzd and his creatures. We need not go into the fabulous actions ascribed to him in later times, as the mention of the character which he sustains is sufficiently indicative of the knowledge of a promised Redeemer.

To these we may add the doctrines of the fall of man, the resurrection, and a final judgment, which were clearly and distinctly recognised.\*

The early annals of this nation, therefore, not only exhibit in a striking manner the progress of idolatry, but show, with equal explicitness, that the tribe which first inhabited Persia carried thither with them the great elements of the patriarchal faith.

EGYPT next presents itself to our attention. This has always been regarded as one of the most ancient and powerful of the primitive nations. In the earliest ages of which we possess any record, it had a regular government, enjoyed the benefit of the useful and ornamental arts, and was celebrated for wisdom and learning. The ancient history of this country is also invested with special interest, from its being the only one of the primitive nations which was brought into immediate contact with Europe. For while Nineveh, Babylon, Persia, China, and India, lay far remote, and were scarcely known even by name in the first days of Greece or Rome, Egypt, from its great proximity, and favourable situation on the shores of the Mediterranean, was early known, and frequently visited, and thus became the teacher of the entire western world in arts, literature, and religion.

If, therefore, the means of obtaining correct information

\* See ample details in FORSTER'S "History of Persia," chap. iv.



respecting the early history of Egypt were as ample as the importance and interest of the subject, the present inquiry would be truly delightful. It is, however, to be regretted, that not only does this investigation partake of the difficulties common to all researches into remote antiquity, but presents, in addition, special and peculiar causes of uncertainty and embarrassment.

Considering the circumstances of the dispersion of families from Shinar, which has been discussed in a previous chapter, there appears good reason for believing that Nimrod, having obtained ascendancy at Babel, remained there with some other branches of his family. Another portion of the descendants of Ham journeyed westward toward Africa. The family of Canaan remained at Palestine; while Misraim, with the main body of the tribe, continued his course toward Egypt. They first settled at Zoan or Tanis. The time occupied in this progress seems to be obscurely intimated by the sacred writer, when he says, "Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt." (Num. xiii. 22.) It appears, however, that although the chief of the tribe for a while located at Zoan, he did not remain there; for it is generally believed that he afterward founded Thebes. The name of this city literally signifies "an ark."

No reasonable doubt can be entertained that the first kind of government introduced into Egypt, and by the heads of families in all the different countries which they occupied, was patriarchal, and that this subsisted for a considerable period; until an increased population, with perhaps numerous rivalries and dissensions, rendered a more vigorous and complete political arrangement necessary; under which circumstances monarchy was established.

Nothing would be more gratifying to us than to be able to cast light upon the infancy of this empire, and, from its first occupation by the family of Misraim, to bring down the history of Egypt to the death of Isaac. This cannot, to any considerable extent, be hoped. Deep obscurity and great chronological difficulties pertain to this subject. All, therefore, that our limits will allow us to attempt, is, to notice the



principal sources of information, and then, following the best guide, briefly to exhibit the history of this period.

The first authority in the order of time, as well as of importance, is Moses. The notices of Egypt found in the books of Genesis and Exodus are, though few, very valuable. In the account given of the visit of Abraham to this country, we see the state of society at that period. Egypt had a king, princes, and officers of state. This is all the information which is afforded by scripture, and which properly belongs to the era at present under consideration; although the history of Joseph and of the exodus greatly confirms the preceding account, and makes many interesting additions to our knowledge of this kingdom.

The "Old Chronicle" is perhaps the most ancient profane authority extant on the history of Egypt. An imperfect copy of it is preserved by Syncellus, and given by Jackson. The learned monk observes respecting it, "There is an Old Chronicle current among the Egyptians, which I think misled Manetho, containing thirty dynasties, during one hundred and thirteen generations, for the immense number of 36,525 years. These dynasties consisted of three classes; the first Aurites, the second Mesraites, the third Egyptians."

"The time of Vulcan (first of the Aurites) is not set down, because he shines night and day. Helius (the sun), son of Vulcan, reigned 30,000 years. Then Saturn and the rest of the twelve gods reigned 3,984 years. Then the demi-gods, who were eight, 217 years."

"After these, fifteen generations of the Cynic circle are recorded to have reigned 443 years."

As this part of the Chronicle is all that applies to the era under consideration, it is not necessary at present to quote the remaining portion.

Manetho was a learned Egyptian priest, who, by desire of Ptolemy Philadelphus, wrote the Egyptian Antiquities, from ancient records and from written pillars, about B.C. 258. His account is principally relied on as far as it is known. The work is now lost; and all the information which we possess respecting it, is found in a fragment preserved by



Josephus, in his Epistle to Apion, and an abstract containing the succession of the kings, and a few historical facts, in the Chronography of Syncellus; before whose time the original work of Manetho appears to have been lost, and all that he could obtain of it were extracts which had been embodied by former collectors; namely, Julius Africanus, and Eusebius, in their compilations. These writers differ so much in several parts of their extracts, as to make it evident, either that great errors had crept into Manetho's work, or that one of them must have corrupted it by design.

Theodorus and Diodorus Siculus have also preserved, in their writings, extracts referring to the ancient history of Egypt. But as they selected only what they thought interesting, without even preserving the chronological order of the events recorded, their works can only be useful as assisting us to obtain some further information respecting the kings whose names are preserved by Manetho.

The tablet of kings at Abydos may be regarded among the monumental inscriptions which cast important light upon the history of ancient Egypt. This valuable record, which is now in the British Museum, was discovered by Mr. W. J. Bankes, at Abydos, where it was engraved on the wall of one of the vestibules of the temple. It contains a list of the kings at Thebes, arranged in the order of succession.

It will also be necessary to notice an inscription in the interior of a chamber in the palace of Karnak, at Thebes. It represents Thothmosis III., or Mœris, the fifth king of the eighteenth dynasty, as doing homage to the whole line of his ancestry, or predecessors. These are ranged round the room in three rows. As the room was evidently built for this purpose, it is very improbable that there should be any inaccuracy in this list.

Eratosthenes has also bequeathed to us a list of ancient Egyptian sovereigns. He was a native of Cyrene, born B.C. 276, and in the fiftieth year of his age was appointed superintendent of the Alexandrian library. He was celebrated for his knowledge of mathematics, astronomy, geography, and chronology. By order of Ptolemy, he formed a



catalogue of the succession of Egyptian kings, for which he collected materials from records in the Egyptian language, and from information communicated by the sacred scribes of Diospolis, adding interpretations in Greek of the Egyptian names. His works were lost before the time of Syncellus, who has preserved his list of kings by extracting them at second hand from the chronology of Apollodorus.

Besides these authorities, we might refer to Homer, Hesiod, and a few others; but their communications on the subject are not important, in respect of the period now under consideration.

From the preceding sketch of the various means of information which we possess concerning this subject, the reader will perceive that the catalogue of Manetho, in the state in which it has come down to us, is not worthy of unqualified confidence, and leads to strong suspicions that he has been either mistaken or corrupted by his copyists. We can supply one proof of this, which will, we think, be decisive. According to Eusebius, this succession of reigns extended over a period of 5,176 years; and therefore, if, as appears to be proved by Dr. Prichard, Psammetichus, the fourth king of the twenty-sixth dynasty, began to reign B.C. 671, the commencement of Manetho's chronicle will be thrown back to B.C. 4820. We do not stay to show the impossibility of this, but refer to the important fact, that Josephus, who possessed the entire works of Manetho, and regarded them as of high authority, assures us, that Menes began to reign many years before Abraham, and one thousand three hundred years before Solomon; which, as we have already said, places the origin of the Egyptian monarchy about B.C. 2330. It is therefore impossible that the chronology of Manetho, as given by himself, could have been the same as is exhibited in the fragments of his work which have been handed down to us.

This is a point worthy of much consideration; such importance having been attached to Manetho, that, by many, his authority has been deemed sufficient entirely to set aside the chronology of the scriptures. If we had not so often noticed the infidel readiness to reject the truth of revelation on the



most flimsy ground, this would be truly amazing. Manetho wrote more than a thousand years after Moses, and a century later than Eratosthenes; and all we possess of his works are fragments preserved by different authors. In these circumstances it must be obvious to every unprejudiced mind, that, placing entirely out of the account the inspired character of the Mosaic record, there can be no comparison whatever between the authority of the clear and consecutive history given us by the Hebrew lawgiver, and that of the fragmentary remains of the Egyptian priest.

It will also be observed, that this corrupted version of Manetho is not only at variance with all the schemes of scripture chronology, but also with every other authority. A judicious reader will, of course, strike off the reigns of gods and demi-gods: this being done, if from B.C. 350, when the empire was subdued by Persia, we reckon upwards according to the Old Chronicle, we shall have the accession of Menes placed B.C. 2496. The Chronicle of Eratosthenes and the catalogue of Syncellus both profess to begin B.C. 2600.

The agreement of three independent sources of information (for the Old Chronicle will admit of our placing the reign of Menes as early as B.C. 2593) is quite sufficient to prove the inaccuracy of Manetho, even if we possessed no means of pointing out the cause of the error, or of effecting a chronological arrangement of his list on which we can rely.

Dr. Prichard has, we think, proved that the eighteenth dynasty succeeded to power about B.C. 1679. Now, if from this period we count our way up to Menes, we find the date of the Egyptian monarchy placed about 2572 B.C. Before we decide on what appears to be most probable with respect to these dates, we may show the important aid furnished by some of the monumental discoveries to which allusion has been made. From Menes to the time of Abraham, Manetho gives two hundred and sixty kings; while the tablet of Abydos, which we have every reason to regard as a genealogical series of sovereigns ranging over the same period, has but forty-nine sovereigns, instead of these two hundred and sixty. In the sculptured chamber at Kar-



nak, where Thothmosis III. is represented as doing homage to his ancestors, we have but fifty-eight kings, which will leave us for this period only thirty-eight, instead of the two hundred and sixty of Manetho. The conclusion to which we are conducted, therefore, is that which has been so clearly established by preceding writers,—that the tables which are now presented to us as *successive* series of reigns were, when compiled, intended to exhibit *collateral* dynasties, which reigned at the same time over different parts of Egypt, at Thebes, Memphis, and other places.

This solution, while it accounts for the serious discrepancies which have been noticed, prevents us from attempting to give any list of sovereigns as reigning in Egypt during this period. There are, however, some important facts which we may place in connexion before the reader, and shall only have to add a few explanatory remarks and illustrations to close our notice of this nation.

|                                               |     |     |       | B.C. |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----|-----|-------|------|
| Misraim settled in Egypt                      | ... | ... | about | 2613 |
| Menes began to reign                          | ... | ... | about | 2412 |
| Invasion of Lower Egypt by the shepherd kings |     |     |       | 2159 |
| First Pyramid begun                           | ... | ... | ...   | 2095 |
| Abraham visits Egypt                          | ... | ... | about | 2070 |
| Expulsion of the shepherds                    |     | ... | ...   | 1899 |
| Exode of the Israelites                       | ... | ... | ...   | 1648 |

We have in these dates been principally guided by Dr. Hales; but the precise era of them is open to doubt.

Menes, having ascended the throne, is said to have turned the Nile into a more direct channel, and raised an embankment in order to check the overflowing of the river, and to have founded on its former bed the city of Memphis. Diodorus says of him, that “he taught the people the adoration of the gods, and the manner of Divine worship; how to adorn their beds and tables with rich clothes and coverings; and was the first that brought in a delicate and sumptuous way of living.”\* “By advice of his prime minister, Thoth, he divided the whole country of Egypt into three lots: these

\* “Historical Library,” book ii. chap. 2.



were appropriated to the crown, the priesthood, and the soldiery, who each farmed out to the people their respective shares.”\*

Whatever doubt may exist as to the accuracy of these reports, there is one event respecting which we have ample testimony from profane authors, and which is sufficiently attested by holy scripture,—the invasion of Egypt by the shepherds.

Manetho has given the following account of this foreign dynasty, in a fragment preserved by Josephus, *Contra Apion*. lib. i. sec. 14:—“We had formerly a king named Timaus (or Tammus). In his reign, God, upon what account I know not, was offended with us; and, unexpectedly, men from the east, of obscure origin, boldly invaded the kingdom, and subdued it without a contest. Having mastered the former rulers, they then barbarously burnt the cities, demolished the temples of the gods, and treated all the inhabitants most hostilely: massacring some of the men, and reducing the wives and children of others to slavery.

“They next appointed one of their leaders king, whose name was Salatis. He resided at Memphis, and imposed a tribute on Upper and Lower Egypt, and put garrisons in the most important places. But chiefly he secured the eastern parts of the country, foreseeing that the Assyrians, who were then most powerful, would be tempted to invade the kingdom likewise. Finding, therefore, in the *Saite* nome, a city situated most conveniently on the north side of the Bubastic channel, (of the Nile,) which was called Avaris (or Abaris, † that is, ‘the pass’) in an ancient theological book, he rebuilt and fortified it most strongly, and garrisoned it with two hundred and forty thousand soldiers. Hither he used to come in summer, to furnish them with corn and pay; and he carefully disciplined them, for a terror to foreigners. He died after he had reigned nineteen years.

“The next, called Bœon, reigned forty-four years; and after him, Apachnas, thirty-six years and three months; then

\* HALE’S “Analysis of Chronology,” vol. iv. p. 424.

† “This was afterwards called Pelusium.”



Apophis, sixty-one years; and Janias, fifty years and one month; and after them Assis, forty-nine years and two months. These six were their first kings, who were continually at war with the Egyptians, and wished of all things to eradicate them.

“ Their whole nation was called  $\Upsilon\text{K}\Sigma\Omega\Sigma$  *Uksos*, that is, ‘Royal Shepherds,’ for  $\Upsilon\text{K}$ , in the sacred tongue, signifies ‘king;’ but  $\Sigma\Omega\Sigma$  in the vulgar dialect, ‘shepherd,’ or ‘shepherds.’ Some say they were Arabs.”

“ In another copy,” says Josephus, “ I find that the term  $\Upsilon\text{K}$ , when aspirated, signifies ‘captives’ in the Egyptian language; whence  $\Upsilon\text{K}\Sigma\Omega\Sigma$  *Huksos*, ‘captive shepherds;’ a title applied to the Israelites afterwards, in the sacred books of the Egyptians, from their pastoral life, (Gen. xlv. 32,) and from Joseph, their ancestor, styling himself a captive; (Gen. xl. 15; xli. 12;) whom Manetho represented as descended from the royal shepherds.

“ At length, the native Egyptian princes rebelled against these tyrants, and, after a tedious warfare, drove them out of the rest of Egypt, and shut them up in Avaris, where they had collected all their cattle and plunder, and besieged them with an army of four hundred and eighty thousand men. But, despairing of success, the Egyptians concluded a treaty with them, and they were suffered to depart unmolested from Egypt, with all their households, amounting to two hundred and forty thousand souls, and their cattle. Accordingly, they crossed the Desert; but, being afraid to return home, on account of the Assyrian power, which then held Asia in subjection, they settled in the country of Judea, and there built Jerusalem.” \*

The learned author of the “New Analysis of Chronology” observes, on this extract: “In this curious fragment of Manetho, truth and falsehood are blended together. The conquest of Egypt by the Arabian shepherds, and their subsequent expulsion in the reign of Assis, the sixth king of the Shepherd dynasty, are true; but they were not the ancestors of the Israelites, or ‘captive shepherds,’ nor did they settle

\* MANETHO, quoted by JOSEPHUS, DR. HALES’S translation, and notes.



in Judea after their expulsion, but westward, along the coast of the Mediterranean, where they destroyed the natives, the 'Avim,' or 'Avites,' after 'they came from Caphtor,' or Lower Egypt. (Deut. ii. 23.) And in allusion to their expulsion from thence, they are styled 'the Philistines, the remnant of the country of Caphtor,' (Jer. xlvii. 4,) preserving in the name of their country the remembrance of their origin; for Palestine, in the Sanscrit, or ancient Syriac, signifies *Pali-sthan*, or 'Shepherd land.' " \*

We have a singular confirmation of this history from the Hindu records. Captain Wilford, in his elaborate treatise on Egypt and the Nile, in the "Asiatic Researches," vol. iii., mentions two remarkable migrations from the east, in remote times; first, of the *Yadavas*, or "sacred race," and afterwards of the *Pali*, *Palli*, or "shepherds." The former of these appear to be the first settlers of the earth, the three primitive families, of whom the whole earth was overspread; consequently, Misraim's family made a part of it.

"The *Pali*, *Palli*, or 'shepherds,' were a powerful tribe, who in ancient times governed the whole country, from the Indus to the mouth of the Ganges, and are called *Palibothri* by Pliny, and *Paliputras* in the sacred books of the Hindus. These were an active, enterprising, roving race, who spread themselves, by conquest, colonization, and commerce, widely throughout Asia, Africa, and Europe.

"Crossing over from the coasts of the Persian Gulph, they colonized the sea-coasts of Arabia and Africa; in the latter, their country was called Barbaria, from *Berber*, 'a shepherd,' according to Bruce, who describes them as a distinct race from the natives."† An important branch of this family appears to have made a descent on Egypt in very remote times: its members are therefore the subjects of the narrative which we have given, and, on their expulsion from that country, became the Philistines of scripture.

Although Egypt is said to have been completely subdued by the shepherd kings, the native sovereigns still continued

\* HALE'S "Analysis of Ancient Chronology," vol. iv. p. 425.

† *Idem*, *ibid.* p. 426.



to rule in regular succession, in certain localities. This is evident from the fact which Josephus distinctly narrates, "that the Egyptian kings of the Thebaid and other parts of the country revolted from the yoke of the shepherds;" which proves that the native sovereigns still continued to rule, and that there were two or more dynasties reigning, at the same time, over different parts of the country.

The first pyramid was begun during this Shepherd rule. "The name of the founder of the great pyramid has been detected in a small tomb in its immediate vicinity. It is written in Greek by Manetho, Σουφίς, which is said by Eratosthenes to mean in Egyptian κομαστος, 'one who has much hair.' The hieroglyphic name has the same meaning in Coptic."

The name of his son, who founded the second pyramid, has also been discovered. It reads Shefre on the sculpture: he is called Suphis II. by Manetho, and Cephrenes by Herodotus. "It is inscribed on a beautiful tablet, now in the British Museum, which was brought from one of the tombs near Memphis, and was engraved in memory of a personage who acted as superintendent of the building of the great pyramid to king Cephrenes. The execution of this tablet is exquisitely beautiful, perhaps not surpassed by any existing specimen of Egyptian art."\*

The name of the founder of the third pyramid was discovered, under very extraordinary circumstances, by Colonel Howard Vyse. He brought to light, from the interior of this colossal building, a hieroglyphic inscription, beautifully engraved on the lid of a coffin. This sculpture confirms the account of Manetho, who calls this king Mencheres. It seems an unanswerable proof of the early date of these buildings, that a picture of a pyramid forms a part of the name of Memphis. The immutability of all things in Egypt warrants the opinion from this fact, that their erection was nearly, if not quite, as early as the building of the city.

These three sovereigns are found succeeding each other in

\* "The Antiquities of Egypt," p. 188.



the fourth dynasty of Manetho. Of the first, he states, "Suphis reigned sixty-three years: he built the largest pyramid, which, Herodotus says, was constructed by Cheops. He was arrogant toward the gods, and wrote the sacred book, which is regarded by the Egyptians as a work of great importance. Suphis II. reigned sixty-six years; Mencheres, sixty-three years." \*

It is a singular fact, that if we refer to the *Laterculus* of Eratosthenes, we not only find these three sovereigns succeeding each other, but placed precisely at the time when these pyramids are supposed to have been built. This list of kings terminates, according to Syncellus, B.C. 1524. And if we count our way up four hundred and forty-nine years, we reach the death of Morcheres, evidently the Mencheres of Manetho and of the monuments. This is proved by his having been preceded by two sovereigns of the name of Saophis. Adding 449 to 1524, we have 1973 for the death of Mencheres. The fact of these three pyramids having been erected by three successive sovereigns, the last of whom was Mycerinus, or Mencheres, is also attested by Herodotus, who informs us that they were constructed by those who held the people in bondage, and ruled with great severity and oppression. He also says that they were called shepherds, and held by the people in great detestation. His words are, "Thus, for the space of one hundred and six years were the Egyptians exposed to every species of oppression and calamity, not having, in all this period, permission to worship in their temples. For the memory of these two monarchs they have so extreme an aversion, that they are not very willing to mention their names. They call their pyramids by the name of the Shepherd Philites, who at that time fed his cattle in those parts." †

All these circumstances unite to prove that our previous conjecture is correct,—that these pyramids were begun during the period of shepherd rule; that the native kings exercised authority at the same time over other parts of the country;

\* CORY'S "Fragments," p. 102.

† *Euterpe*, cxxviii.



and, further, that, having expelled these intruders, they ascribed these prodigious works to themselves, by whom, perhaps, they were finished. This circumstance also is intimated: for we are told by Diodorus Siculus, that the kings who built the first two pyramids designed them for their sepulchres; "yet it happened that their remains were not here deposited. The people were so exasperated against them, by the severe labours they had been compelled to endure, and were so enraged at the oppressive cruelty of their princes, that they threatened to take their bodies from the tombs, and cast them to the dogs: both of them, therefore, when dying, ordered their attendants to bury them in some secret place." \*

We see, then, that, whatever obscurity may rest on the details of early Egyptian history, enough is elicited to afford abundant confirmation of the scriptural account. It is manifest, from the behaviour of Joseph to his brethren, his charge respecting them that they were spies, and the circumstance of "every shepherd being an abomination to the Egyptians," that Egypt had been, but some short time before, delivered from the scourge of the shepherd kings, a race of foreigners who invaded and retained possession of the country for a considerable period.

It was during the rule of these sovereigns that Abraham visited Egypt; and the Pharaoh at whose capital he resided was a shepherd king. Although, as might have been expected, we have no allusion in Egyptian history to this visit of the Hebrew stranger, still the scripture narrative casts important light upon the state of this country at this period. Pharaoh is found surrounded by his princes, and invested with state. Abraham is courteously received, (for there is no proof that the taking of Sarah into the house of the king was intended as an injury,) and allowed all the freedom that the most civilized country could afford. These facts make it apparent, that, whatever may be said by the native Egyptian writers of this race of sovereigns, they were neither ignorant

\* "Historical Library," book i. chap. 5.



nor barbarous. Still the fact that a man with Abraham's large family establishment, numerous servants, and prodigious flocks and herds, could pass and repass through the country, obtaining every accommodation without difficulty or annoyance, exhibits a striking picture of the state of population and manners then existing in the country; and proves the extreme probability of its having been invaded and subdued by one of these numerous nomadic hordes, then roving about, seeking a permanent settlement.

Very few observations are necessary respecting the learning, science, and art of Egypt during this period. A people who could raise the great pyramid must have had ideas as gigantic, and mechanical science and means as complete, as those of which any modern nation can boast. On this subject in general, we need only express our strong conviction, from a careful review of the whole, that the science and art of Egypt do not exhibit progressive improvement. The earliest pyramids are as colossal, the earliest sculptures are as beautiful, as any afterward produced. This uniformity not only pervades existing remains, but is also sanctioned by history. As we have already observed, Diodorus was told that even Menes, the first sovereign, introduced the greatest luxuries in furniture, diet, and dress; and that these were carried to such excess, that it was afterward found necessary to reform and correct them.

We must now turn to the subject of religion. This, in respect of Egypt, is of vast importance. The result obtained by an author, who has devoted great talents and unremitting industry to the investigation of this particular, is worthy of consideration. He says, "The religion of Egypt underwent no alteration from the time of its establishment by Menes to that of its abolition by Christianity."\* If we can rely on this judgment, (and we are assured that we may do so fully,) then this subject presents to our view the means of obtaining some information respecting the principles which led to the first departure from the patriarchal faith in postdiluvian times,

\* "The Antiquities of Egypt," p. 116.



and of casting light upon the idolatry known to have been so early adopted by the family of Ham. Before we proceed to show the character and principles of this religion, we quote from the accomplished author his proof of this assertion :—

“ The reading of the hieroglyphics has elicited this singular fact, the proofs of which may be discovered in almost any class of remains to which we direct our attention. A large proportion of those which are deposited in the Museums of Europe consists of funereal monuments, such as sarcophagi in granite or alabaster, mummy-cases, votive tablets, and papyri. On several of these are inscribed the names of the rulers of Egypt, during whose reigns they were executed; and even where this is wanting, the style of the execution will enable a practised eye to determine the date with considerable probability. We know, therefore, that these monuments belong to all the periods of the history of Egypt, from the Pharaohs of the sixteenth dynasty, who were contemporary with Abraham, down to the emperor Alexander Severus, who lived in the third century of the Christian era. The narrow slip of papyrus, covered with a clumsy and almost illegible scrawl, which accompanies the Egyptio-Greek or Roman mummy, is a faithful copy, nevertheless, of some part of the long roll of prayers and rubrical directions, whose elegantly-formed characters, and exquisitely-finished illuminations, indicate that it belongs to those remote periods when the arts in Egypt were at their perfection. The same divinities are besought for the same blessings in both. This uniformity is still more evident on the wooden mummy-cases, which are common to all collections. They likewise belong to various epochs. Sotimes the priest, whose mummy is at Turin, lived in the times of the eighteenth dynasty, about B.C. 1500. Ensa-Amon the scribe, whose body is in the Leeds Museum, was contemporary with the twentieth, about B.C. 1100. There is a splendid case at Liverpool, which had been the depositum of Apices, one of the sons of Psammetichus II., of the twenty-sixth dynasty, who lived about B.C. 600. There are mummy-cases also in the British Museum, and in the



Louvre, having Greek inscriptions, which inform us that they contain the descendants of the same family; and that they died, the one at Petamen, (at Paris,) in the nineteenth year of the emperor Trajan, A.D. 117; the other, Tphout, (Brit. Mus.) in the fifth year of Adrian's reign, A.D. 122. But all these are decorated in accordance with the tenets of the same mythic system. Differing from each other very widely as to the pattern or mode of disposing the parts of the picture, the same divinity is, nevertheless, depicted and invoked on all of them, over the same part of the body. So that in the one thousand six hundred years which elapsed from the time of Sotimes to that of Tphout, the religion of Egypt had undergone no alteration. This is also corroborated by the numerous similar monuments without dates which abound in the Museums of Europe. They are all embellished after this manner, though belonging to every known period of Egyptian history; as the different styles of art in which they are executed sufficiently indicate.

“This immutability of the religion of Egypt, which the monuments existing in Europe thus render so highly probable, is reduced to absolute certainty by the study of the sculptures and inscriptions that cover the remains of the numerous temples which still attest the devotion of the ancient inhabitants of the Nile to the system of their mythic belief. Among the hitherto unexpected truths which the commission of learned men of France and Italy to Egypt in 1828 discovered and illustrated, there is not one which is more satisfactorily made out than this. We give at length the account of the circumstances, which prove demonstrably a fact so important to our present argument.

“The temple of Dakke, in Nubia, was begun by the Ethiopian Ergamenes, the contemporary of Nechao; was carried on by Ptolemy Euergetes I., 246 B.C., and by his grandson Euergetes II., B.C. 180; but was completed by the emperor Augustus, A.D. 6. Near the gateway of this temple I discovered the remains of a more ancient one, the dedication of which is still extant on two immense blocks of stone. It was constructed by the Pharaoh Mæris, B.C. 1736;



and was consecrated to the same form of Thoth, or Mercury, as the present temple. Here is a fact which, like many similar ones, proves that Ergamenes and the Ptolemies merely rebuilt the temples in the places where they had existed in the times of the Pharaohs, and in honour of the same divinities which had always been worshipped there.

“ ‘This point is a very important one : the latest temples erected in Egypt contain no new form of divinity. The religious system of this people was so entirely one, so united in all its parts, and prescribed so absolutely and precisely from time immemorial, that the dominion even of the Greeks and Romans produced no innovation upon it. The Ptolemies and the Cæsars merely rebuilt the temples which the Persians had destroyed, and dedicated them to the same gods.’ (*Champollion’s Lettres de l’Egypte*, letter xi. p. 151.)

“ ‘I have ascertained, that at Talmis, in Nubia, there have been three editions of the temple of Malouli, the god of that district : one built by the Pharaohs, in the reign of Amenophis II., B.C. 1723 ; a second, of the era of the Ptolemies ; and, lastly, the temple now existing, which was never finished, in the times of Augustus, Caius, Caligula, and Trajan, A.D. 100. And the hieroglyphic description of the divinity on a fragment of the first temple, which has been used in building the third, differs in nothing from the same legends on the more recent ones. Thus, then, the local worship of all the cities and towns in Nubia and Egypt underwent no modification ; and exactly the same idols, whose worship had been instituted at first, continued to be adored up to the day on which their temples were closed for ever by the triumphs of Christianity.’ (Page 157.)

“ ‘The immutability of the Egyptian mythology is also abundantly observable in the temples and temple-palaces of Thebes. The additions made to them by the later Pharaohs, the Ptolemies, and the emperors, all carefully abstain from the most distant approach to innovation in their religious allusions. The same divinities are invoked by the same legends on the modern as on the ancient parts of these stupendous monuments of Egyptian greatness. The dogmas of



religion, therefore, which are taught in the papyri and other remains, are assuredly those which prevailed in Egypt in the times of Abraham." \*

We have now to refer to the principal doctrines of this religion. This must be done with great brevity, and merely by showing that this people held the chief elements of what we have exhibited as the patriarchal faith; and then by pointing out the manner in which the truth was forsaken and idolatry introduced.†

No doubt can exist that this people primarily held the doctrine of the unity of God, and believed that he was omnipotent and omnipresent. Singularly enough, even their polytheism proves this; their superior gods have the name of the Supreme added to their own, and the inferior gods are represented as his descendants. In fact, all their divinities were but emanations from, and parts of, the one God. The Greek writers confirm this opinion. Porphyry says that, originally, the Egyptians worshipped but one God; Herodotus states that the inhabitants of Egypt retained the idea of a God, self-existent, and from eternity to eternity; and Jamblichus declares that the Egyptians worshipped God, the Master and Creator of the universe, above all the elements, self-existent, immaterial, incorporeal, uncreate, indivisible, unseen, and all-sufficient, who comprehends all things in himself, and imparts all things to all creation.‡

Another doctrine universally believed was that of the immortality of the soul. Herodotus, after a most extended investigation into the antiquities of several ancient nations, regarded the Egyptians as pre-eminent for the belief of this opinion; and says, "They are also the first of mankind who have defended the immortality of the soul."§ This truth was, as might be expected, according to the system of

\* "Antiquities of Egypt," p. 120.

† It would have given us great pleasure, if this subject could have been fully investigated here; but the plan laid down renders it impossible. If the author is permitted to perfect his design, the third volume of "Sacred Annals," will contain a complete exposition of the religion of Egypt.

‡ *De Myster. Egypt.*

§ *Euterpe*, cxxiii.



Egyptian metaphors, represented in a coarse and earthly manner. The separate spirit was denoted in hieroglyphics by a hawk having a human head.

The future judgment, and final rewards and punishments, were also fully recognised.

On the death of the individual, the soul was believed, on leaving the body, to be conducted into the judgment-hall of Osiris : here all the actions of its life while in the body were examined, by forty-two ministers of vengeance. In the presence of the judge, these and other divinities, or genii, rigorously scrutinize the conduct of the soul while incarnate upon earth ; its motives, most significantly symbolized by a heart, are placed in the huge balance of Amenti, and in the opposite scale is placed the symbol of justice and truth, indicative of the inexorable nature of the scrutiny which is taking place. The judgment is recorded, full of joy to the good, and of woe to the wicked. The former pass into regions of blessedness. "Over them is inscribed, 'They have found favour in the eyes of the great God ; they inhabit the mansions of glory, where they enjoy the life of heaven : the bodies which they have abandoned shall repose for ever in their tombs, while they rejoice in the presence of the Supreme God.' " \* The wicked were supposed to be sent back to inhabit other bodies on earth ; but if, after their transmigrations, they still remained polluted, their hope perished for ever, and they were consigned to the regions of darkness and eternal death : while suspended over them are the words, "These souls are at enmity with our God."

The Egyptians were also well acquainted with the doctrine of Divine Providence. Of this we need adduce no other proof than that which is afforded by the fact, that the national historian, when recording the shepherd invasion, distinctly recognises it as a judicial infliction sent by God on account of some sins committed against him.

\* "Antiquities of Egypt," p. 162.



There is also reason to believe that the early Egyptians had some knowledge of the promise of a Redeemer.

The proof of this must, however, be sought in their idolatrous system. On this point we cannot do better than quote again from the writer to whom we have so often referred:—"This most ancient mythology, as described by authors who lived before the Christian era, and as set forth on the walls of the temples in which its ritual of worship was performed, was taught to the initiated, and concealed from the vulgar, that God created all things at the first by the primary emanation from himself; His first-born, who was the Author and Giver of all wisdom and of all knowledge, in heaven and on earth, being at the same time the Wisdom and the Word of God. The birth of this great and all-powerful Being, his manifestation as an infant, his nurture and education through the succeeding periods of childhood and of boyhood, constituted the grand mystery of the entire system; and, more extraordinary than all, he also undergoes a succession of births, through a descending series of emanations, which, harmonizing perfectly with the doctrine of metempsychosis, so well known to be peculiar to the Egyptian priesthood, conveys, by a metaphor not to be mistaken, their persuasion that this same august Being would at some time become incarnate, and be born upon earth as an infant."\*

Hence we are told that "a small edifice was erected by the side of every temple, the entrance to which was through the *adytum*, or sanctuary; so that it was, in the estimation of the people, the holy of holies, the perfection, or crowning mystery of the entire worship. This is termed in the hieroglyphic inscriptions MA-EM-MISI, 'the birth-place.' Like every other part of the temple, it is covered with reliefs and paintings, in which are detailed the particulars of the birth of the third person of the triad, to which the temple is dedicated."†

This evidence, in connexion with the no less important

\* "Antiquities of Egypt," p. 145.

† *Ibid.* p. 140.



fact, that the primary form, or antitype of the entire mythology, is a triad of divinities, and that through all the immense extent of the system the same form of triad is maintained, has led some eminent men to suppose that those who founded the Egyptian religion must have had some knowledge of the doctrine of the Trinity. Without giving a positive opinion on this subject, (which is still under investigation,) we may venture to say, that, in our judgment, it is much more probable that it is a direct reference to the promise of a Redeemer. Two uniform features of the system appear to raise this conjecture into certainty. The Son or Word of the Egyptian mythology is always the third person in the triad. And, again: the second person is always a female. So in the primary triad we have AMOUN the father, MOUT the mother, and CHONS the infant son: the allusive character of the temple sculpture. The first person of the triad is very frequently, in the sculptures on the walls of the temples, represented with the countenance and figure of the Pharaoh who had erected it, and the second person with those of his queen; so also on the *Ma-em-misi*, the birth of the young god is, in the same curious manner, identified with the birth of the founder, or his first-born son. Thus, the birth-place of the palace of Luzor commemorates at once the birth of the god Chonsis, and of Amenophis Memnon, by whom the principal part of the stupendous edifice was erected.

The great hope and end, therefore, which the Egyptian religion held forth to that people, was the birth of a God; this their expectation being evidently not metaphorical, but real, because they always identified it with actual occurrences.

The morals of the system may be inferred from the following, which is supposed to be part of an address delivered by a departed soul to Osiris, on entering the hall of judgment: it made a part of the ritual of the ancient temple service: "I have defrauded no man; I have not slaughtered the cattle of the gods; I have not prevaricated at the seat of justice; I have not made slaves of the Egyptians; I have



not defiled my conscience for the sake of my superior ; I have not used violence ; I have not famished my household ; I have not made to weep ; I have not smitten privily ; I have not changed the measures of Egypt ; I have not grieved the spirits of the gods ; I have not committed adultery ; I have not forged signet-rings ; I have not falsified the weights of the balance ; I have not withheld milk from the mouths of my children."

We have now to notice, very briefly, the error, superstition, and idolatry which were so early introduced into the religion of Egypt. No fact is better attested, or more fully known, than that, whatever elements of truth might be retained by the early occupiers of Egypt, they established a system of religion replete with almost every form of idolatry.

The deification of the Sun was perhaps the earliest form of idolatry. On whatever principle it was established, this was embraced by the Egyptians. "They certainly worshipped the Sun. There is scarcely a monument on which that luminary is not represented and invoked as a deity." This worship, with the Egyptians, was not pure Sabeism : the heavenly bodies were not regarded as supreme gods, but as symbols or impersonations of their attributes.

Human beings were also objects of worship. There can be no doubt that the arkite patriarchs made a prominent portion of these deities. Marsham says, Osiris was the same as Ham ; and the Abbé Banier, that Misraim was worshipped under this designation. Kings and princes also were afterward invested with divine attributes, and worshipped with supreme adoration.

But the most remarkable part of Egyptian idolatry consisted in the worship of animals. And here we can scarcely draw a line of distinction. Almost every creature, beast, alligator, and bird, had a place in the Egyptian pantheon.

We will not expatiate on the absurd exhibition which this presents, but notice the principles which led to the adoption of it.

According to Manetho, animal worship was first introduced into Egypt by Chous, the second king of the second dynasty.



His words are, "Under him the bulls Apis in Memphis, and Mnevis in Heliopolis, and the Mendesian goat, were appointed to be gods." This testimony proves the extreme antiquity of this institution. It is evidently an essential and component part of the Egyptian idolatry, and therefore must have arisen contemporaneously with the rest of the system. It is merely the impersonation of Divine attributes by animal forms. Thus the infinite height and depth of the Divine mind are represented by a hawk, because that bird soars perpendicularly up, and drops again perpendicularly down, in her flight. The ape or cynocephalus, was worshipped as the living image of the moon; because, according to their most absurd notions of natural history, this animal becomes blind, and eats nothing during the lunar change. The ape also represented Thoth, the ruler of the moon and the god of letters; because they fancied that there was one species that was acquainted with the art of writing. The vengeance of God was exhibited by a crocodile. In this way representations of the Divine attributes were found in every part of the animal creation, and all were deified.

Mr. Cory, in his "Mythological Inquiry," labours to prove that animal worship originated in the adoration of the cherubic creatures. We believe that there is much truth in this remark, and that several of the compound figures, such as sphinxes, &c., were produced for this purpose.

Yet, whatever might have been the leading thought, or the progressive steps by which this fearful amount of evil was brought into operation, there can be no doubt of its fatal influence on the best interests of mankind. It shut out man from access unto God, blinded his eyes by a mass of absurd dogmas and superstitious rites, and led him to bow in prostrate adoration, not only to bulls and crocodiles, but even to monkeys and beetles.

Nor is it to be imagined that this worship of heavenly bodies, human beings, and animal forms, arose from any philosophical refinement. We are not left in uncertainty as to the great moving principle of all this mass of error. Truth had been revealed; a way of salvation, through faith



in sacrifice, had been appointed. Men rejected the wisdom of God, and introduced their own inventions. Their heart was alienated from God; they affected wisdom at the expense of obedience. The first settlers on the banks of the Nile, then, were idolaters at heart; they had already drunk deep of "the cup of abominations" which the "mother of harlots" had held forth to them. Knowing much of God, "they glorified him not as God, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." (Rom. i. 21—23.) The Egyptian sages reached the full extent of this wickedness and folly.

We can only mention a fact which has been fully proved,—that the language, written character, and religion of Egypt arose at the same time. Scattered from Babel, with the curse of God still tingling in their ears, incapacitated for either speaking or writing as they had formerly done, the sons of Mizraim journeyed to the banks of the Nile. Here they employed their cultivated intellect to supply these wants: a language was framed, a written character adopted, and a religious system devised. Yet all these bear indubitable traces of idolatry. Although important elements of primitive truth are preserved, they are neutralized, because God is dethroned, and men worship the creature and not the Creator, who is God over all blessed for ever.



## CHAPTER XI.

## A GENERAL VIEW OF THE POSTDILUVIAN PERIOD.

DESIGN of the Chapter—Synchronistical Chart—Dispersion—Discrepancy in the Chinese Annals—Origin of Empires—Condition of the People—Use of Balances—Spinning and Weaving—Mode of Travelling—Use of Metals—Coined Money—Military Arts and Weapons—Musical Instruments—Hunting and Sporting—Commercial Intercourse—The Phenicians—Tyre—Overland Trade—Science and Learning—Summary.

WE have already considered the most prominent particulars in the history of the world, from the Deluge to the death of Isaac. The Dispersion ; the history of the scripture patriarchs, and the character of their religion ; with the rise of the several primitive empires, their early history, and the origin and progress of idolatry in them ; have all in succession passed under our review. We do not now purpose to extend our researches further into any of these subjects. But it will be important for us to regard the history of this period as a whole ; to consider the relative position of these several empires ; to see how far the accounts of each are sustained or contradicted by those of the others ; and, if possible, to form some just estimate of the civilization, science, learning, and religion of that era.

To aid the reader in comprehending this subject, we invite his attention to the annexed Synchronistical Chart, which exhibits collaterally the principal events of each kingdom in the same century, and shows the contemporary scripture patriarchs for the whole of the time. This, in connexion with the Genealogical Table already given, will enable us further to elucidate those points which it may be necessary to notice.

The first particular which calls for attention is the Dispersion. This event, according to the best opinion we have been able to form, took place in the latter part of the fourth century after the Deluge. But, if this is correct, we have to



account for the discrepancy presented by the annals of China. The Chart shows that Fohee is supposed to have begun to reign in China B.C. 2953, and died B.C. 2838. Shuckford, who, although an advocate for the abbreviated chronology, perceived that on any principle Fohee would be contemporary with Noah, first suggested the idea, that Fohee was the same as Noah, and that, leaving his sons to journey toward Shinar, he conducted a portion of the population eastward, and settled in China. He supports his views by the following reasons: "The first king of China was Fohi; and as I have before observed that Fohi and Noah were contemporaries, at least, so there are many reasons from the Chinese traditions concerning Fohi to think him and Noah the same person. 1. They say Fohi had no father, that is, Noah was the first man in the postdiluvian world: his ancestors perished in the Flood; and, no tradition hereof being preserved in the Chinese annals, Noah, or Fohi, stands there as if he had no father at all. 2. Fohi's mother is said to have conceived him, encompassed with a rainbow; a conceit very probably arising from the rainbow's first appearing to Noah, and the Chinese being willing to give some account of his original. 3. Fohi is said to have carefully bred seven sorts of creatures, which he used to sacrifice to the supreme Spirit of heaven and earth; and Moses tells us, that Noah took into the ark of every clean beast by sevens, and of fowls of the air by sevens: and after the Flood Noah built an altar, and took of every clean beast, and every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings. 4. The Chinese derive the name of Fohi from his oblation, and Moses gives Noah his name upon account of the grant of the creatures for the use of men, which he obtained by his offering. 5. Lastly, the Chinese history supposes Fohi to have settled in the province of Xeusi, which is the north-west province of China, and near to Ararat, (in Cashgar,) where the ark rested. But, 6, The history we have of the world does necessarily suppose, that these eastern parts were as soon peopled, and as populous, as the land of Shinar; for within a few ages in the days of Ninus and Semiramis,"\*

\* SHUCKFORD'S "Sacred and Profane History," vol. i. p. 62.



they were fully able to resist the Assyrian invasion. Although the chronology and history of this extract are very different from our own, we have thought it right to give it, because its principal arguments are applicable to the chronological arrangement which we have adopted; according to which Fohee died about half a century before the death of Noah; and therefore, when the remoteness of the period is considered, these events may be said nearly to synchronize. Besides this chronological coincidence, there are the points of resemblance noticed by Shuckford; most of which, notwithstanding his defective chronology, deserve attention. Are we, then, to believe that Noah, leaving his sons, departed from Armenia, and, journeying with his attendants, settled in the east? We confess that, to our judgment, this notion is too fanciful to be seriously entertained. Besides, scripture clearly teaches that Noah had no children after the Flood. What then is the solution of the apparent discrepancy? Evidently this: the Chinese carried back their history to the time of Noah, and regarded him as their *king* who was only their *ancestor*. We have seen that, in effect, the Egyptians did the same. Sanchoniatho carries up the series of generations from Misraim to Noah, without any interruption; and almost every ancient people connected the patriarch of the ark, and the leading circumstances of the Deluge, with their own history.

It seems therefore probable in this case, that early tradition, brought to China by the first emigrants from Shinar, was appended to their history; and there is no reason why, soon after the death of Arphaxad, China might not have been occupied. Egypt was colonized even at an earlier period than this.

The Dispersion is a great fact, uniformly attested by sacred and profane history, and supported by all accounts of the present character of all nations, and the nature and relation of all languages.

The origin of empires is a subject involved in much obscurity, and rendered doubly difficult by the learned labour which has been employed to elucidate it, in utter contempt



of the authority of holy scripture. We have a striking instance of this in a work replete with learning, to which we have often referred, but which makes Nimrod the father of Ninus, and an emigrant from Egypt during the time of Abraham. The confusion induced by such efforts must be obvious to the most superficial observer.

On the contrary, the arrangement which is based upon the scripture narrative is throughout simple and consistent. Here we have ample time for all the circumstances recorded by Moses : the Dispersion takes place four or five hundred years after the Deluge, Nimrod establishes himself as a sovereign in Babylon, and is the first of a regular series of kings. Nineveh, founded by Asshur, also rises into importance; and about six hundred years after the time of Nimrod, Babylon is subdued by the Assyrian power, which, also, in the same century, extends its dominion over Persia. Thus have we the rise and progress of that empire depicted, which all history assures us existed, and exercised a paramount influence in Central Asia, in the earliest period of authentic history. At the same time the prominent events in the histories of Egypt and China synchronize with this account, and all accord with that of the scripture patriarchs.

Yet, although it is absolutely necessary, in tracing our way through these remote ages, to refer to the names of kings, and to use the periods of their governments as way-marks in our investigations, we are far from thinking that these make up the history of the time, or are even the most important elements of it. The general character of the people, the measure of civilization which they enjoyed, their arts, science, and learning,—habits, manners, and customs,—present to our minds subjects full of great and varied interest, which must at least to some extent be known, if we would form any just idea of the history of mankind during this era.

To this class of inquiries we will now direct attention; and first refer to those arts which are more immediately connected with the comforts and conveniences of life.

Nothing can be more evident than that, long before the



close of this period, every requisite for the supply of the necessities, comforts, and even luxuries of life, was amply provided. And therefore, in noticing those arts to which we particularly allude, we do not wish to produce the impression that these only were known, but rather that, these being assuredly in general use, we may fairly infer all those also of a similar kind to have been practised.

The scales or balances were known, and in common use. We are told that "Abraham *weighed* to Ephron the silver which he had named;" (Gen. xxiii. 16;) and Job exclaims, "O that my grief were thoroughly *weighed*, and my calamity laid in the balances together!" (Chap. vi. 2.) Not only, therefore, was the practice of weighing various commodities common, but the art had passed into a figure of speech; and hence the patriarch, when anxious that his sorrows might be justly estimated, desires that his grief may be "*weighed*," and his calamity "*laid in the balances*."

Spinning and weaving were also understood and practised. Various kinds of clothing had undoubtedly been always in use. Soon after the period of which we are speaking, we find clothing made ornamental, and distinctive of rank. Joseph's coat of many colours was of this kind, and so were "the vestures of fine linen" in which the same individual was arrayed when he had so satisfactorily interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh. We have, however, direct reference to peculiar distinctions of this kind before the death of Isaac. Rebekah, we are told, on first meeting her future husband, "took a veil and covered herself." But in this, as in many other similar instances, we have proof that neither sacred nor profane authors give us any full account of the early ages. We are left to reason by the analogy of circumstances, and to infer the existence of useful arts from the state of society, and the general cultivation of mankind. In a case like this, any reference to arts, however slight, becomes important. Several allusions occur in Genesis and Job, which are to the purpose; but we refer only to one: "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope." (Job vii. 6.) On this text, Dr. Mason Good ob-



serves: "The Hebrew קָלִי implies 'levity of weight, tenuity, exility,' in its first meaning; and 'swiftness,' by which idea the term is commonly translated, in the second, as a mere result of the first. אֶרֶב denotes equally the material and the instrument of the weaver,—the woof or yarn, and the shuttle with which he weaves it. The speed of the weaver's shuttle conveys a less pertinent idea, if I mistake not, than the slightness or tenuity, and consequent brittleness, of the weaver's yarn, with which it is armed. I still believe, however, with most commentators, that the allegory of the web of life, as previously woven by the Fates, and tissued for every individual, was coeval with the author of the present poem, and is probably here referred to."

This passage, however, whatever may be its exact rendering, evidently proves that spinning and weaving had already been carried to a state of great perfection. It is important to place by the side of this text the information supplied by the traditions of China. In the reign of Hoang-tee, who was contemporary with Selah and Eber, we are told that this prince, "observing one day the beautiful material produced by the silkworm, suggested to the ladies of his family that it might possibly be converted into a dress more elegant and commodious than could be afforded by the skins of animals. He and his successor, indulging that propensity to minute legislation which prevails in a rude state of society, appointed to the public servants, according to their rank and office, the colours of their respective garments. These were to imitate the tints of the sky or of the earth; and the ornaments worked upon them were to be the figures of such creatures as had some resemblance in their dispositions or qualities to the official duties of the wearer." \*

We are further informed, that during the reign of Hoang-tee weights and measures were invented, and the first principles of arithmetic taught. He also formed the finer metals into an imperfect species of coin. At this time, also, wag-gons were constructed, and animals used in drawing them;

\* "History of China," vol. i. p. 46, Edinburgh Cabinet Library.



lighter carriages were contrived for the purposes of travelling ; boats were employed in navigating rivers, and bridges built for crossing them.

We are not disposed to attach undue importance to such notices as these ; yet it is impossible to overlook the precise agreement of this account with the general scope of the history of these times, when regarded in reference to scripture authority. We are here informed that, after the Flood, men were thrown back again upon the primitive means of clothing,—the skins of animals ; but that, when a suitable and beautiful material was discovered, all the means of converting it into clothing were known. We hear of no difficulty as to spinning, weaving, dyeing, or even embroidering. All these appear to have been well-known arts, and are, as such, referred to incidentally.

We may next advert to the mode of travelling, which, in the east, from the most remote antiquity, has been in large companies or caravans. There can be no question that the journeys of Abraham and Lot must have had this appearance ; and it is no less certain that smaller companies, about to journey in the same direction, united together for the double purpose of self-defence and mutual accommodation. That such caravans were common about the close of this period, is certain ; for, in the time of Jacob, the company of Ishmaelites and Midianites, who were travelling merchants, were evidently journeying in this manner. Upon this point a competent authority observes : “ Here, upon opening the oldest history in the world, we find the Ishmaelites from Gilead conducting a caravan loaded with the spices of India, the balsams and myrrh of Hydrumaut ; and, in the regular course of their traffic, proceeding to Egypt for a market. The date of this transaction is more than seventeen centuries before the Christian era ; and, notwithstanding its antiquity, it has all the genuine features of a caravan crossing the Desert at the present hour.” \* In corroboration of the early date ascribed to this mode of travelling, the same

\* DR. VINCENT'S “Commerce and Navigation of the Ancients,” vol. ii. p. 262.



learned author states: "So far as a private opinion is of weight, I am fully persuaded that this line of communication with the east is the oldest in the world; older than Moses or Abraham." \*

It is a singular and interesting fact, that these views are also confirmed by the inspired author of the Book of Job. In chapter vi. 15—21, there is a fine description of a land-flood, its speedy disappearance in consequence of evaporation, and the consternation of the caravans, on arriving at the place, and finding no water where they expected full supplies; the whole being applied by Job to his own case, who compares to these deceitful streams his three friends, by whom he found himself deserted, as to comfort, when he most required their help. He pathetically observes:—

"As to my brethren, they are perfidious like a brook,  
Like a torrent which rushes through the valley:  
Whose waters are swollen by the melting of ice,  
And turbid by reason of the snow.  
Summer comes, and they disappear;  
The heat absorbs them, and they are dried up.  
Caravans turn thither on their route;  
They perish in the midst of the desert.  
The travellers of Teman looked anxiously,  
The caravans of Sheba panted for them.  
They blushed for their own confidence;  
They came to the spot, and were confounded.  
In like manner ye are become useless to me:  
Ye see my misery, and recoil with horror."

"The caravans are here represented as dismayed, on finding the torrent bed, which at a distance appeared to be full of water, completely dried up. The whole of this description is accurate and striking." †

The use of metals is so essential to the existence of the useful and elegant arts, that it becomes important to refer to any information which shows them to have been known in this age. It is observable here, that, when Moses speaks of the geography of Eden, he explicitly states the mineral productions of the several districts in its vicinage. The land of

\* DR. VINCENT'S "Commerce and Navigation of the Ancients," vol. ii. p. 365.

† WEMYS'S "Job and his Times," p. 314.



Havilah is celebrated for its gold: the bdellium and onyx-stone are also said to be found there. Whether these products were discovered in antediluvian times or not, it is certain they were in use long before the time of Moses, so that the fact had obtained general notoriety. It is not, however, uncertain whether metallurgy was known before the Flood. We have already shown that Tubal-Cain was an "instructor of every artificer in brass and iron;" and in the period under consideration gold and silver were not only known, but in common use: Abraham gave unto Ephron four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant. And his servant presented unto Rebekah bracelets of gold, and other ornaments. These and several other proofs which might be adduced, show that the arts necessary to the obtaining and purifying of the metals were well known and generally practised. We shall, however, only add the illustrations of this subject which are supplied by the Book of Job. In chapter xxviii. of this ancient poem, we have a remarkable picture of mining operations, of the purifying of metals, and of the value of precious stones. We give the passage entire:—

"Truly there is a mine for silver,  
And a bed for gold which men refine:  
Iron is dug up from the earth,  
And the rock poureth forth copper.  
Man delveth into the region of darkness,  
And examineth to the utmost limit  
The stones of darkness and death shade.  
He breaketh up the veins from the matrix,  
Which, though thought nothing of under the foot,  
Are drawn forth, are brandished among mankind.  
The earth of itself poureth forth bread;  
But below it windeth a fiery region:  
Sapphire are its stones,  
And gold is its ground:  
The eagle knoweth not its pathway,  
Nor the eye of the vulture descrieth it;  
The whelps of ferocious beasts have not tracked it:  
Man thrusteth his hand into the sparry ore,  
He up-turneth the mountains from the roots.  
He scoopeth channels through the rocks,  
His eye discerneth every precious gem.  
He restraineth the oozing of the streams,  
So that what was concealed becomes radiant.



“ But wisdom ! where shall it be found ?  
Where is the abode of understanding ?  
Mortal man knoweth not its origin ;  
Nor is it to be found in the land of the living.  
The abyss saith, ‘ It is not in me ;’  
The sea saith, ‘ Nor yet in me.’  
It cannot be obtained for virgin-gold ;  
Nor shall silver be weighed for its price.  
It cannot be purchased with the gold of Ophir,  
With the precious onyx or the sapphire.  
The diamond set in gold cannot equal it ;  
Nor can jewels of pure gold compare with it.  
Speak not of agates or of pearls ;  
For the value of wisdom is far beyond rubies.  
The emerald of Cush cannot rival it ;  
Nor for the Arabian topaz can it be bartered.” \*

It is scarcely necessary to direct the reader to the amount of information supplied by this passage. Here we have the mining of the most important metals—gold, silver, iron, copper—distinctly mentioned.

The “ stones of darkness,” and “ the region of darkness,” plainly allude to the subterranean excavations of the mines. The depth, darkness, and intricacy of these are further indicated by showing that the most daring beasts of prey would hardly enter them ; that the ravenous vulture never penetrated their recesses. The intense heat of this subterranean region is stated ; in fact, the entire economy of mining is exhibited ; the rocky strata in which the metals are found, the labour and danger of up-turning the mountains, are portrayed with graphic accuracy. Then we have a detail of the measures taken to divert the streams of water, and to restrain and control their progress. Nothing can be more certain than that the entire process of mining for metals and precious stones must have been known to the writer of this piece. It is impossible to account for its production on any other principle.

The refining and purifying of metals are also described. The imbedded ore in the matrix, the fining of the gold and silver, are exhibited. We have also in this interesting

\* In the first part of this piece we have adopted Dr. Mason Good’s translation, and in the latter that of Mr. Wemys.



passage of holy writ, a large catalogue of precious stones : the sapphire, onyx, diamond, agate, pearl, ruby, emerald, and topaz, are specially noticed. It is, indeed, admitted, that there is great uncertainty in the translation of the original terms which represent the names of these gems ; but we do not think that this circumstance affects the main scope of the subject. There can be no doubt that these names were used to designate precious stones ; and if in one or two cases we are uncertain as to the exact species, it does not invalidate the general argument.

It is certain that the knowledge and practice of such arts must have had an important bearing on the civilization of the age. Another question of an analogous character respects the existence of coined money. In the authorized translation of Job xlii. 11, we are told that when the Lord restored the patriarch to health and prosperity, his friends and kinsmen visited him, and that "every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an ear-ring of gold." The term which in this text is rendered "a piece of money," is found in only two other passages of the Old Testament,—Gen. xxxiii. 19, and Joshua xxiv. 32. In the former of these, the term is rendered "pieces of money," and in the latter "lambs." In all these cases the Septuagint reads "lambs;" but in the passage referred to in the Book of Job, that version, instead of "an ear-ring of gold," reads "a shekel of gold, and some unstamped:" a fact which gives countenance to the supposition generally entertained, that the first money, being coined and brought into use by an agricultural people, had the image of a lamb impressed on it. It is obvious that the present of a lamb would have been very insignificant in the case of Job, living as he did among a pastoral people. Besides, the immediate connexion of the phrase with "an ear-ring of gold," seems to show that the present must have consisted of money or precious metal. It should also be observed, that the purchase of the field of Succoth by Jacob is said by Stephen to have been made by "a sum of money." (Acts vii. 16.)

"Bochart contends that some species of money is indicated



by these terms, and assigns the following reasons for his opinion :—

“ ‘ 1. Because the scripture, in treating of sheep and lambs, never calls them by this name.

“ ‘ 2. Because the same term in the Talmudists, and almost all the modern Hebrew writers, signifies *money*.

“ ‘ 3. Because of its feminine termination, and the improbability that Jacob should buy a field for a hundred lambs, or that Job should receive such gifts from his friends.

“ ‘ 4. Because, at that period, those only were reckoned proper purchases which were made with money.

“ ‘ 5. Because in Acts vii. 16 the field is said to have been bought of the sons of Emmor, not with lambs, but with a money price.’ ” \*

Although, therefore, we cannot regard the point as free from doubt, it does not appear improbable that at this time money, or some adaptation of the precious metals equivalent to coined money, was in general use.

The book of Genesis plainly declares that not only were empires then raised, and kingly state maintained ; but that wars were waged, districts and communities subjected, and brought under tribute ; and afterwards, that a desperate but unsuccessful conflict was hazarded, in the hope of retrieving independence. Profane history abundantly confirms this account, and exhibits the rise of empires, the progress of ambition, and at length the subjugation of Babylonia and Persia to the Assyrian power. In the records of those times are found several allusions to a state of warfare, and to the arts, weapons, and *materiel* then employed in military operations ; to which we may now briefly refer. The book of Job contains many such allusions. In chap. vi. 4, we have a reference to arrows, and to arrows rendered more deadly by being charged with poison.

\* Quoted by WEMYS, p. 324. It should be remembered, in addition to the above, that long before this we read of a kind of money in use in China.



“Behold, the ARROWS of the Almighty are within me ;  
Their poison drinketh up my spirit.”

Many efforts must have been made in the art of human destruction, before poisoned arrows were invented ; yet it is clear that they were at least as ancient as the book of Job. It is admitted that the language which we have quoted is figurative ; but, as we have on previous occasions intimated, the fact must have existed before it could have been made the basis of a figure. “In using these terms, Job no doubt had a reference to the practice of his own day in the prosecution of warfare. The wounds inflicted by such arrows produce a burning fever, and an intense parching thirst, so as to dry up all the moisture in the system, inflame the blood, produce putrescence, and terminate in raging mania, from which the patient is relieved only by death. The metaphor occurs again in verse 9, where the patriarch beseeches God to loosen his hand, like an archer drawing his bow to the head, and then letting go his hand, that the arrow may fly to the mark. In chap. xii. 20, Job plainly alludes to the mark at which arrows are directed. See also chap. xxi. 12.” \* But, what is still more surprising, we have in this same inspired book an allusion to the use of bows manufactured of steel or brass. The authorized version gives the text thus : “He shall flee from the iron weapon, and the bow of steel shall strike him through ;” (chap. xx. 24 ; ) and Dr. Mason Good renders it,—

“Should he flee from the clashing steel,  
The bow of brass shall pierce him through.”

It is not certain what metal was used for this purpose ; but there can be no doubt that some metallic substance was employed in the construction of bows. Repeated mention is likewise made of the sword. We are told that the servants of Job were slain “with the edge of the sword.” (Job i. 15—17.) “He saveth the poor from the sword.” (Chap. v. 15.) “He

\* WEMY'S “Job and his Times,” p. 311.



is wailed for of the sword." (Chap. xv. 22.) "Be ye afraid of the sword," &c. (Chap. xix. 29.) The shield or buckler is also mentioned. We read of "the thick bosses of his buckler." (Chap. xv. 26.) And, in the description of the leviathan, it is said, "His scales" (margin, "strong pieces of shields") are his pride." (Chap. xli. 15.) The attack and defence of towns is also referred to in chapter xvi. 12—14:—

"I was at ease, but he hath broken me up;  
Yea, he hath seized me by the neck, and crushed me;  
He hath even set me as a mark for him:  
His arrows fly around me;  
He pierceth my veins without mercy;  
My life-gall hath he poured on the ground.  
He stormeth me with breach upon breach;  
He assaulteth me like a warrior."

But none of these allusions, plain and pointed as they are, afford such abundant evidence of the perfection which martial proceedings had attained at this period, as the spirited description of the war-horse given in the nineteenth chapter of this book:—

"Hast thou given the horse strength?  
Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?  
Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper?  
The glory of his nostrils is terrible.  
He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength;  
He goeth to meet the armed men.  
He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted;  
Neither turneth he back from the sword.  
The quiver rattleth against him,  
The glittering spear and the shield.  
He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage.  
He standeth not still at the sound of the trumpet.  
At the blast of the trumpets he saith, Ahah!  
And he smelleth the battle afar off,  
The thunder of the captains and the shouting."

We have no hesitation in asserting that this highly poetic picture could only have been produced in an age in which military tactics and martial prowess existed in great perfection. Various kinds of weapons and armour are here mentioned; the government of captains, and the inspi-



riting influence of martial music ; the fury of the battle-field ; and all this rendered so familiar to the noble steed, that he rejoices in the clang of arms, and exults in terrible conflict. Men may laugh as they please at the fabulous accounts which have been handed down to us of the wars of Ninus and Semiramis ; but while such passages as those which we have quoted are found in the book of Job, we shall continue to believe that, long before those sovereigns were born, the art of war was well known, and practised to a fearful extent.

We have already seen that musical instruments were made and employed before the Flood. As might have been expected, the use of them was revived in the postdiluvian world. We have just intimated that the sound of the trumpet was heard in the field of battle. There are several allusions to other instruments. In Job xxi. 12, we read, "They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ." And again, chap. xxx. 31 : "My harp also is turned to mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep." It would be difficult now to describe with precision the kind of instruments to which these names were applied in those early days ; nor would this be of any importance. There can be no doubt that the original terms referred to distinct and specific instruments. Our English translators appear to have been puzzled in this matter, and to have rendered these terms at random. "It would have been well, however, if they had observed uniformity of rendering, in which they are sadly deficient. For example : *Nebel* is translated a 'psaltery' in one place, 'viol' in another, and 'lute' in a third. *Tep* is called a 'timbrel,' and also a 'tabret.' *Menen* is termed a 'stringed instrument,' but of what kind we are not informed."\* The *kinura*, or "harp," seems to have been an instrument of the stringed kind, played on with the hand, or with a plectrum. Before this time an emperor of China was celebrated for having invented or improved musical notation.

Hunting, as well as what is now called sporting, was in

\* WEMY'S "Job and his Times," p. 327.



use, and the various requisites for its practice were provided. In Job xviii. we have a full display of the means employed in securing the prey.

“The steps of his strength shall be straitened,  
His own counsel shall subvert him.  
He is caught by the feet in a pitfall;  
Perfidious snares encompass him.  
The trap shall lay hold of his heel :  
It shall fasten thoroughly upon him.  
A cord is hid for him in the ground,  
And a gin under his path.  
Terrors await him on all sides,  
They force him to retrace his steps.  
His strength shall be enfeebled by hunger,  
Destruction shall march at his side.”

This passage describes the efforts of the huntsmen to drive the wild beasts into a place where they may become an easy prey : hence, while forcibly urged into this enclosure, it is said, “The steps of his strength shall be straitened.” The different methods are carefully enumerated : “the pitfall, snares, trap, cord hid in the ground, the gin.” The noise of dogs and huntsmen, and the alarm they produce in the affrighted animal, are also depicted. “Terrors await him on every side.” And, finally, when subdued and taken, it is said, “Destruction shall march at his side.” Chapter xli. gives a description of the same pursuits, when practised in the watery element : “Canst thou drag forth leviathan with hook and line? Say, canst thou fix the cord to his snout, or pierce his jaw through with the barb? Say, wilt thou fill his skin with harpoons? and his head with fish-spears?”

We might pursue this subject, and present similar details in almost every branch of art, and every employment of mankind. We everywhere find man in full possession of all the requisites for comfortable and cultivated existence.

The natural and inevitable induction, from the small portion of evidence already given, proves, that the various handicraft arts must have been generally practised, that all the useful and ornamental operations in wood and metal were well known, and that those arts were not confined to the production of the mere necessities of civilized life, but that even



taste, elegance, and ornament were then known and appreciated.

There is, however, one point which these investigations fully establish,—the existence and wide range of commercial operation and intercourse ; without which it is impossible to conceive of a state of society supplied with useful and ornamental articles. No single locality could furnish all the requisites for these numerous and varied productions. The several metals and precious stones would certainly have been procured from different, and perhaps very distant, districts. This is indeed plainly taught in the brief notices which we have of this period. We read of the gold of Ophir, the emerald of Cush, the Arabian topaz. It would be both interesting and important to trace the character and extent of these commercial operations ; but the extreme remoteness of the period renders this so difficult and uncertain, that little can be hoped to result from the most laborious investigation. It will be desirable, however, to notice a few facts which have been preserved on record, or which may be satisfactorily inferred.

Some fragments of information may be elicited by referring to the early history of the Phenicians, who were undoubtedly among the most ancient of nations, and eminently devoted to commercial pursuits. It is probable that Dr. Hales has placed the foundation of Tyre as correctly as possible: he supposes it was built B.C. 2267 ; which was about the time of the birth of Nahor. But, whether this be correct or not, it is an admitted fact that, B.C. 1600, holy scripture calls the parent city, “ the great Sidon ;” and Tyre is referred to, at the same period, as “ the strong city of Tyre.” If the exact date of the foundation of these cities be regarded as doubtful, it is yet certain that, at an early period, they must have arisen into great importance ; and it is equally certain, from the character and habits of the people, as well as from the nature and limited extent of the country which they occupied, that they were from the beginning engaged in mercantile transactions which required a familiar acquaintance with the art of navigation.



We cannot pretend to fix with accuracy the time when these trading operations began ; but a brief inquiry into the circumstances will prove that it must have been very early. If Tyre was built about B.C. 2267, as she was the offspring of Sidon, it is fair to presume that the Phenician people were in a prosperous state even at that period. This opinion is confirmed by other evidence. We know that the Phenician Hercules undertook his expedition into the Western Ocean, and that the important colonies of Cadiz and Carthage were established, long before the destruction of Troy, which, according to Dr. Hales, took place about the year B.C. 1183. It is certain, therefore, that important commercial intercourse with the west was carried on at a much earlier period. A further confirmation of this is obtained by reference to the era of Melcarthus's expedition ; which, we are told, was three hundred years before Jason went to Colchis, and which, in the opinion of Hales, took place B.C. 1225. According to this account, therefore, the Phenician Hercules sailed into the Western Ocean B.C. 1525 ; and, if so, there would be ample time in the ensuing two or three centuries for the consolidation of the trade and the foundation of numerous colonies. We have a strong corroboration of these dates in the fact, that Moses, B.C. 1640, speaks of tin and lead being found among the spoils of the Midianites ; and we have not the slightest evidence that these metals at that period were procured in any other country than in Spain and Britain. We see, therefore, that all the fragments of information which we possess relative to this subject, unite in assuring us that the Phenicians conducted a regular trade into the Western Ocean for a long time previous to B.C. 1500, and, consequently, during the period which is now under our consideration.

Since this is the case, then, it will not be doubted that an internal trade of great importance must have been carried on much earlier. It can hardly be supposed that the Phenicians began their commercial operations with Spain and Britain, when all Central and Eastern Asia was within their reach by land. We cannot enumerate the various isolated references to this early commerce which have been handed



down to us : we will only quote the opinions of an author who has fully investigated the subject. "I can prove," says Dr. Vincent, "that spices were brought into Egypt (which implies their introduction into all the countries on the Mediterranean); and I argue from analogy, that Thebes and Memphis, in their respective ages, were the centre of this intercourse, as Alexandria was afterwards, and as Cairo is, in some degree, even at the present hour.

"That some oriental spices came into Egypt, has been frequently asserted, from the nature of the aromatics which were employed in embalming the mummies; and in the thirtieth chapter of Exodus we find an enumeration of cinnamon, kassia, myrrh, frankincense, stacte, onyca, and galbanum, which are all the produce either of India or Arabia. Moses speaks of these as precious, and appropriate to religious uses; but at the same time, in such quantities, as to show they were neither very rare nor very difficult to be obtained. Now, it happens that cinnamon and kassia are two species of the same spice, and that spice is not to be found nearer Egypt or Palestine than Ceylon, or the coast of Malabar. If, then, they were found in Egypt, they must have been imported; there must have been intermediate carriers; and a communication of some kind or other, even in that age, must have been open between India and Egypt. That the Egyptians themselves might be ignorant of this, is possible: for that the Greeks and Romans, as late as the time of Augustus, thought cinnamon the produce of Arabia, is manifest from their writings. But it has been proved, from Agathorciades, that the merchants of Sabêa traded to India; and that at the time when Egypt possessed the monopoly of this trade in regard of Europe, the Sabêans enjoyed a similar privilege in regard to Egypt. Of these circumstances Europe was ignorant, or only imperfectly informed; and if such was the case in so late a period as a few years before the Christian era, the same circumstances may be supposed in any given age where it may be necessary to place them.

"There are but two possible means of conveying the commodities of India to the west; one by land through Persia or the provinces of the north, and the other by sea; and if



by sea, Arabia must in all ages have been the medium through which this commerce passed, whether the Arabians went to Malabar itself, or obtained these articles in Karmánia, or at the mouths of the Indus.

“ In order to set this in its proper light, it is necessary to suppose that the spices in the most southern provinces of India were known in the most northern ; and if from the north they might pass by land, from the south they would certainly pass by sea, if the sea were navigated. But in no age were the Persians, Indians, or Egyptians navigators ;\* and if we exclude these, we have no other choice but to fix upon the Arabians, as the only nation which could furnish mariners, carriers, or merchants in the Indian Ocean.

“ But let us trace the communication by land on the north ; it is only in this one instance that I shall touch upon it ; and that only because it relates to a time prior to Moses. Semiramis is said to have erected a column, on which the immensity of her conquests was described as extending from Ninus or Ninevè, to the Itámenes, (Jómanes or Jumna,) eastward ; and southward, to the country which produced myrrh and frankincense ; that is, eastward to the interior of India, and southward to Arabia. Now, fabulous as this pillar may be, and fabulous as the whole history of Semiramis may be, there is still a consistency in the fable ; for the tradition is general, that the Assyrians of Ninevè did make an irruption into India ; and the return of Semiramis†

\* “ It is not meant to assert that those nations never used the sea : they certainly did, upon their own coasts ; but there are not now, nor does history prove that there ever were, any navigators, properly so called, in the eastern seas, except the Arabians, Malays, and Chinese. The Chinese usually came no farther than the coast of Malabar ; the Malays seem in all ages to have traded with India, and probably with the coast of Africa.”

† “ When two fables of different countries agree, there is always reason to suppose that they are founded in truth : the Mahabhárat is perhaps as fabulous as the history of Semiramis ; but this work, in Colonel Dow’s account of it, specifies, upon a variety of occasions, the great attention of the Indian sovereigns to pay their tribute to their western conquerors. I cannot trace this to its causes or consequences ; but it almost seems to justify the idea, that there had been some conquest of India, by the nations which inhabited those provinces which afterwards



through Gadosia, by the route which Alexander afterward pursued, is noticed by all the historians of the Macedonian. If, therefore, there is any truth concealed under this history of Semiramis, the field is open for conceiving a constant intercourse between India and the Assyrian empire, and a ready communication between that empire and the countries bordering on the Mediterranean. This intercourse would account for the introduction of the gums, drugs, and spices of India into Egypt, as early as the twenty-first century before the Christian era, and four hundred and seventy-six years antecedent to Moses.

“ But this is not the leading character in the accounts left us by the Greek historians ; they all tend to Phenicia and Arabia. The Arabians have a sea-coast round three sides of their vast peninsula ; they had no prejudices against navigators, either from habits or religion. There is no history which treats of them which does not notice them as pirates or merchants by sea, as robbers and traders by land. We scarcely touch upon them accidentally in any author, without finding that they were the carriers of the Indian Ocean.

“ Sabêa, Hadramaut, Oman\* were the residence of navigators in all ages, from the time that history begins to speak of them ; and there is every reason to imagine that they were equally so, before the historians acquired a knowledge of them, as they have since continued down to the present age.

“ It is surely not too much to admit, that a nation with these dispositions in the very earliest ages crossed the Gulph of Persia from Oman to Karmánia : the transit in some places is not forty miles ; the opposite coast is visible from their own shore ; and if you once land them in Karmánia,

composed the Persian empire. It is this conquest in which the Grecian accounts of Semiramis and the Mahabhárat agree.”

\* “ Hadramaut is the Atromitis of the Greeks : it is nearly central between Sabêa and Oman on the ocean. Oman is the eastern part of Arabia, towards the Gulph of Persia. Sabêa is Yemen, on the Red Sea, but extends, or did anciently extend, to the ports on the ocean, as Aden, &c.”



you open a passage to the Indus, and to the western coast of India, as a conclusion which follows of course.

“These considerations, taken in the mass, induce a belief that in the very earliest ages, even prior to Moses, the communication with India was open, that the intercourse with that country was in the hands of the Arabians, that Thebes had owed its splendour to that commerce, and that Memphis rose from the same cause to the same pre-eminence.” \*

Thus, then, the existence of an extensive traffic, even in these early ages, appears to be established. The wares and spices of the east are shown to have passed westward through Assyria and Arabia to Egypt, and thence to have found their way to the extreme parts of Europe by the agency of Phenician navigators. This view is confirmed by all the information which scripture, or the fragments of profane history, have communicated. Hence, when Job speaks of merchants, the Hebrew word which he employs, כְּנַעֲנִי is equivalent to “Canaanite” or “Phenician.” † It is probable that not only was this journeying from one country to another necessary to the existence of commerce, but almost all trade was carried on by itinerant dealers. It is a curious circumstance, illustrative of this point, that when Moses, referring to Abraham, speaks of “silver, current money with the merchant,” he not only informs us of the general prevalence of commerce, and that laws had been enacted, and even international regulations made, for its management, but also casts light upon the manner in which it was conducted. The

\* DR. VINCENT'S “History of the Commerce, Navigation, and Discoveries of the Ancients in the Indian Ocean,” vol. ii. p. 66.

† On this word Parkhurst observes, “Many have thought (and I was once myself of the same opinion) that merchants were called כְּנַעֲנִי from the name of the Canaanites; but the passages quoted under Sense I. show that כְּנַעֲנִי strictly means a ‘merchant’ or ‘trader,’ and, consequently, that Canaan himself was denominated from the word in this sense.” When, however, we consider that Canaan was named immediately after the Flood, and that his descendants were the most commercial people of ancient times, with all deference to the learned lexicographer, we think his first opinion more reasonable than his second, and that the text indicates the existence of Phenician commerce, even as early as the time of Job.



Hebrew term employed to designate "merchants" in the passage quoted, is  $\text{קָנָן}$  which means in general "to move to and fro," to pass freely up and down a country. But it is also used to signify "a trader" or "merchant," one who travels up and down for the purposes of traffic, or to sell his wares. In this sense it is used in the text under consideration, and in many other places in the Old Testament: a fact which supports the opinion given above, that the terms "merchant" and "traveller" were usually synonymous.

The early rise and great extent of this commerce give a character to this age, and solve some of the most difficult problems in its history. They account for the ancient celebrity of the Phenicians, and the early wealth and splendour of Egypt. The same causes will explain the remote era ascribed to the building of Persepolis,\* the rapid rise of Babylon and Nineveh, and the early and general cultivation and prosperity of Arabia. Let this be fully recognised, and we are no longer at a loss to account for the extent of geographical knowledge which must have obtained in these times, or for the rapid communication of intelligence by which Abraham or Jacob in Palestine would know the state of the corn-market of Egypt. One of the most essential requisites for a just acquaintance with the ancient world is the knowledge of early commerce.

Before we close our investigation into the history and character of this age, it will be necessary for us to make a brief reference to its science and learning. We will not here repeat what has been advanced in the Preliminary Dissertation; but we take leave to ask the candid reader, Can any thing be more absurd than the notion, that during the whole of this period mankind was entirely destitute of letters and science? Sacred and profane annals, in all their varied aspects and details, unite with one voice to pronounce such an idea ridiculous, and such a state of society impossible.

\* Persepolis was founded by Gemshid, and is on that account to this day called *Tukht-e-Jemsheed*. This prince was contemporary with Terah and Abraham.—MALCOLM'S "History of Persia," vol. i. p. 16.



Yet, as this opinion has been paraded before the public in every conceivable manner, supported by all the influence of learning and rank, until it has well-nigh been invested with the character of an axiom in history, we will add other fragments of information respecting it, from the books of Job and Genesis, and from ancient history.

Respecting the knowledge which men then had of the earth, we refer to Job xxiii. 8, 9. This in the authorized translation is rendered thus: "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him." On this passage Mr. Wemys observes: "Here the four cardinal points are plainly distinguished; so that it appears these Idumeans had a correct view of this matter. The words 'forward,' 'backward,' 'left,' and 'right,' in our version, are intended to denote the east, west, north, and south, the spectator being supposed to look toward the rising sun. The knowledge of this is important for fixing geographical situation. Thus, the Ishmaelites are said (Gen. xxv. 18) to have dwelt *before* Egypt, that is to say, to the east of it; as is apparent from Gen. xvi. 7; Exod. xv. 22; 1 Sam. xv. 7. On similar principles the west is often called *behind*: thus Mahaneh-dan (Judges xviii. 12) is said to be *behind* Kirjath-jearim; that is, westward of it. And the Mediterranean Sea is called 'the uttermost,' that is, the western, 'sea.' (Deut. xi. 24; Joel ii. 20; see also Zech. xiv. 8.) The wind of the sea is 'the west wind.' (Exod. x. 19.) The west side is, in Hebrew, 'the seaward side.' (Exod. xxvii. 12; xxxviii. 12; and other places.) For examples of the *right* hand being used for the south, we may refer to Joshua xvii. 7; 2 Kings xxiii. 13; 1 Sam. xxiv. 24; and for a similar use of the *left*, we may turn to Gen. xiv. 15; and Joshua xix. 27." \*

The simple fact appears to be, that the word rendered "the east," springs from a root which denotes priority

\* "Job and his Times," p. 329.



either of time or of place ; and it came to signify the east, because by the ancients that quarter was deemed the front or fore part of the world.\* This being the case, the language, although rather obscure to us, clearly indicated at that time a knowledge of the four cardinal points.

We have intimations of a still more extended and philosophical acquaintance with the true form and condition of the terrestrial globe. Job says, "He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds ; and the cloud is not rent under them." (Chap. xxvi. 7, 8.) The Septuagint renders the passage thus : "He stretches out the north wind upon nothing, and he upon nothing hangs the earth : binding water in his clouds, and the cloud is not rent under it." The words, "hangeth the earth upon nothing," would certainly, if used in an address by one of our countrymen at the present time, be understood as unequivocally referring to the globular form of the earth, and its mysterious suspension in empty space by the power of God. It is not less certain that the whole scope of the speaker's address not only warrants, but requires, this interpretation. He was expatiating on the greatness, power, and wisdom of God. The connexion of the passage will make this plain :—

"The seat of spirits is naked before him,  
The region of destruction hath no covering.  
He hath stretched out the north over vacant space,  
He hath suspended the earth upon nothing.  
He hath enclosed the waters in the thick clouds,  
And the clouds are not broken by their weight.  
He conceals the face of his throne,  
He spreads a thick cloud over it.  
He has traced a circle on the surface of the waters,  
He has fixed the limits of night and day.  
The pillars of heaven tremble,  
And are struck with consternation at his reproof."

Here, then, the Almighty is described as extending his observation to the mansions of the dead, his vision to the gates of hell : the speaker, filled with the sublimity of his

\* See FABER'S "Origin of Pagan Idolatry," vol. iii. p. 374.



subject, rises to the throne of God, and refers to the clouded glories of that throne. And between these two thoughts, so strikingly displaying the attributes of the infinite Jehovah, Job introduces the words under consideration, "He hath stretched out the north over vacant space. He hath suspended the earth upon nothing." To suppose that the words in this connexion can mean, that the north country was destitute of cultivation, and condemned to indigence, as Dr. Lee does, seems impossible. The whole scope of the discourse demands that the terms should be applied to one of the most remarkable displays of Divine power; and such, indeed, is that wonderful balance of conflicting forces, by which our earth rolls on her orbit as "suspended upon nothing." Mr. Wemys thinks that this interpretation is supported by the following words: "He has traced a circle on the surface of the waters, He has fixed the limits of night and day;" on which he observes, "This shows that the speaker had some notion of the spherical form of the earth."

All who have studied the subject will find this opinion greatly strengthened by the uniform testimony of all antiquity, that astronomy was well known and its usefulness appreciated in those early ages. Nor is it possible to reject this testimony but by an obstinate disbelief of a series of well-attested facts. The history of Egypt proves that this science was taught in that empire long before the termination of the period under consideration: the observations mentioned by Callisthenes, as recorded at Babylon, commenced earlier than the days of Abraham. The celestial science was studied, and has left imperishable memorials on the first pages of Persian history. The laws, usages, and constitution of China, as they existed prior to the time of Ninus, demonstrate the fact that astronomy was carefully studied in that empire. India bears similar testimony; and the Tirvalore tables would never have been doubted but for the prevalence of the abbreviated Masorite chronology. The navigation of the Phenicians attests the same fact in reference to themselves: their nautical science was so perfect, that soon after this age they

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are known to have established a regular series of commercial intercourse from Tyre and Egypt to Britain and the Baltic. Are all these evidences from ancient history to be regarded as fabulous? Are we to reject the united testimony of the world? Even the rough pillars of Stonehenge, and the feasts of ancient Persia, agree in their evidence on this point, and prove that in the infancy of nations astronomy was well understood and almost universally applied.

Our information respecting the scripture patriarchs confirms this opinion. Abraham is said, by the most authentic fragments of ancient historians, to have "taught the Phenicians the motions of the sun and moon." \* The same authority testifies that he was even, among the Chaldeans, "renowned for his justice and great exploits, and for his skill in the celestial sciences." And the plain teaching of holy scripture is to the same effect. Whatever difference of opinion may obtain among commentators, as to the precise meaning of the terms rendered in the authorized translation, "Pleiades, Orion, Mazaroth, Arcturus," and similar expressions, we think no doubt can be entertained that they indicate an acquaintance with the grouping of the stars, the philosophical causes of the seasons, and a precise knowledge of the material universe, which could not possibly have existed but as the results of enlarged abstract and practical science.

We may here refer to Job as exhibiting a fair specimen of the intellectual character of that age. Dr. Lee, in summing up his personal qualities and mental constitution, without any reference to the point of our argument, makes the following observations:—

"Job, unfettered by the exclusive system of the theocracy, deals boldly and fully in doctrines which are universal in their scope, and eternal in their nature. He enters intrepidly into the most abstruse considerations respecting the Divine mind; he descants on its moral attributes, its metaphysical existence, ubiquity, incomprehensibility, and eter-

\* EUSEB. *Præp. Evan.*, p. 9.



nity. He dwells on its justice, mercy, long-suffering, and goodness ; and, with a freedom and light worthy of Christian times, determines that it is His unalienable property to dispense at once both riches and poverty, good and evil ; and, by the operation of a particular providence, to follow with blessings or cursings, respectively, the good and the evil, whatever their stations in life might otherwise be.

“ But it is not with religious considerations of the sublimest character only that our author is conversant ; the range of his inquiries is not limited with the word and abstract properties of the Deity : he ventures, likewise, upon his works, and shows, by deductions, evincing a mind as extensively informed as it was alive to every thing great and noble, not only that the greatness and goodness of God may be seen in these, but also that the contemplation of them cannot but instruct, humble, elevate, strengthen, and adorn the mind of man. At one moment he is conversant with the storms, and seems familiar with the poisonings of the thunder-cloud and stroke of the thunderbolt ; at another, he is present with the planetary system, or still vaster firmament of sun and fixed stars ; at another, he conducts us through the mazes of the great deep, surveying its wonders, and expatiating on its riches or its terrors ; at another, he conducts us through the bowels of the earth, and describes with accuracy the mines of silver, gold, copper, or iron ; at another, he dwells with delight on the powers or beauties of the feathered tribes, the courage of the war-horse, the horrors of war, the terrors of the inhospitable desert, or the woes of starving poverty, under the influence of stormy or freezing skies ; or harrows up our souls with the thrilling description of the last receptacle of sin and misery, the grave, and with the everlasting infamy resting on the name and posterity of the wicked.” \*

Does not all this clearly show the efforts of a mind not only possessed of great natural powers, but also deeply learned and richly cultivated ?

\* DR. LEE'S “ Introduction to the Book of Job,” p. 53.



We are conducted to the same conclusion, by a consideration of the architectural skill displayed in the erection of important cities. The age in which were planned and erected the superb edifices of Damascus, Thebes, Babylon, Nineveh, and Persepolis, must have been as rich in genius as in scientific cultivation. The men who could design and build the colossal Pyramids could not have been ignorant of mechanics, either as regards art or science. No mere brute force could have built Phenician fleets, of sufficient capacity and strength to navigate the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. Homer, speaking of the perfection which navigation had attained about the time of the Trojan war, says,—

“So shalt thou instant reach the realms assign’d,  
In wondrous ships, self-moved, instinct with mind;  
No helm secures their course, no pilot guides;  
Like man, intelligent, they plough the tides,  
Conscious of every coast and every bay  
That lies beneath the sun’s all-seeing ray;  
Though clouds and darkness veil the’ encumber’d sky,  
Fearless through darkness and through clouds they fly.  
Though tempests rage, though rolls the swelling main,  
The seas may roll, the tempests rage, in vain.  
Even the stern god that o’er the waves presides,  
Safe as they pass, and safe repass the tides,  
With fury burns; while, careless, they convey,  
Promiscuous, every guest to every bay.”\*

All the information, therefore, which we have been able to collect respecting this period, tends to confirm and establish the view which we took of the character and condition of mankind in antediluvian times. We find Noah and his sons providing for their immediate wants, cultivating the earth; population extending, until, when mankind had greatly increased, and the arkite patriarchs were dead, the whole human race journeyed in a body to Shinar. Here an attempt was made to frustrate the Divine will, which had enjoined a separation of the different tribes; the city and tower were begun; but the Dispersion was miraculously enforced by the confusion of tongues.

From this point we have to contemplate a new state of

\* “Odyssey,” book viii.



things. Society, as it respected the whole mass of mankind, had been dissolved, and each family was called to form the germ of a distinct people. But, amid all the disorder and confusion which resulted from this infliction, we have, after this event, to regard mankind as separated into two distinct parts or classes; namely, those on whom the light of revealed truth was specially cast, and those who had fallen, or were rapidly falling, into idolatry.

With respect to the first of these, we have the strongest evidence of the existence of spiritual religion. The doctrines shown to have been known before the Flood are here again exhibited, and illustrated and displayed with clearer light. The promise of a Saviour is more distinctly announced, and the glorious economy of his grace more clearly revealed.

The second portion of mankind, although under all the disadvantages of recent and lengthened journeyings, are seen every where rising into refined society, putting forth intellectual energy, founding nations and empires, displaying in their history, traditions, usages, and even in their corrupted religion, unmistakeable evidences that they were once one people, and, as such, favoured with Divine revelation.

In all that can be ascertained respecting both classes, we have the fullest proof that the genial influence of civilization, science, and learning was felt; we find no barbarism but that which was the result of sinful declension. But the entire history of the period, although extracted from a thousand fragments, which are collected from almost every ancient nation, when considered in connexion with the true chronology of the Bible and the great principles of revelation, is found to harmonize with the teaching of the sacred record to an extent which must have been impossible, if the Bible had not contained, not only the most ancient, but also a perfectly true, history of the early families of mankind.



## CHAPTER XII.

## CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS.

SPIRIT in which the preceding Researches have been conducted—Supremacy of Revelation—Scheme of Redemption—Traditions and History of ancient Nations—Table of antediluvian History—The Deluge—The Dispersion—Table of early postdiluvian History—GENERAL VIEWS—Creation and Fall of Angels—Creation of Man—His Fall—Announcement of the Purposes of Redemption—Impressive Disclosure of the Divine Attributes—APPLICATION OF THESE VIEWS—1. To Individuals—Gradual Developement of the Divine Intentions—Clear Views of the Patriarchs—Promise of a Redeemer—Vicarious Sacrifice—Influence of the Holy Spirit—2. General Application—Annual Sacrifice—Family Character of Religion—Tradition—Increase of Evil—Call of Abraham—Summary Intimations of a better Economy.

THE preceding pages contain the information which we have been able to collect respecting the various obscure and recondite subjects involved in the History and Religion of the Patriarchal Age. On some of these, evidence and argument have been adduced against commonly received opinions ; and it is hoped with some success ; on others, it has been impossible to do more than render morally probable what appears to be the truth, direct evidence being beyond our reach ; while, in respect of the whole subject, we have laboured so to blend together the various fragments of information, that they may unitedly present to the mind some distinct and definite idea of the condition and character of mankind throughout this interesting period.

In this effort we have been influenced by one simple motive,—a strong and single-minded desire to ascertain and to record the truth. We had no pre-conceived theories to maintain, no abstract hypothesis to guide us in the use of the historical materials which we had to arrange. Our object, from first to last, has been to ascertain the true condition of man in the various periods of his history, and to



give as connected and consistent a view of the whole, as the nature of the case would admit.

Still we have no wish to conceal the fact, that our researches into this subject have been conducted in a manner, and under the influence of a spirit, not frequently apparent in the labours of those who have prosecuted similar historical investigations. We doubt whether the history of any period or people can ever be properly or usefully written, without a careful investigation of, and a constant reference to, the influence of their religion. But, however this may hold generally, we are bold to say that no just view can be presented of the origin of man, and of the various incidents of his history, through what we have called the Patriarchal Age, without a steady and constant recognition of the Divine purposes respecting man, and the various revelations which he received from God.

Nor by this reference to religion do we mean simply to allude to man's accountability to the Divine government, or to the fact that he was certainly created, and is providentially sustained, by Almighty power. No; we think it essential to a just view of the original condition of mankind, and of their primitive history, that we should recognise that great scheme of Divine Mercy which God has prepared for the redemption of our race, and which, we are authoritatively taught, existed, in some sense, "from the foundation of the world." Those who hold an opposite opinion will excuse the expression of our candid conviction, that nothing can be more absurd than the denial of this. Man is called into being, and is a partaker of animal life. He eats and drinks, he walks to and fro in the earth, and spends a life of labour or pleasure. He mixes up in the various affairs of life, is an element in the great mass of human society, and contributes his quota to the character of his country and his age. He sickens and dies. Some one of his surviving acquaintance may review his life, and record his earthly career; may narrate his projects and pursuits, his success and disappointments. Too often human reason rests here, and worldly curiosity is satisfied. And yet, this man was a



creature of God ! His case excited the interest of heaven ! That he might be led through this earthly career in accordance with the Divine Will, and thus be conducted through death to an eternal heaven, the richest displays of infinite wisdom and power were put forth. He was the object of the unfathomable love of God. For his benefit and blessing, guidance and safety, oft-repeated revelations of truth and mercy were made to his heart by the agency of God the Holy Ghost. Nor can it be said, " But this does not respect his temporal course, and his worldly character." *It does.* All this Divine attention, commiseration, and blessing, are given for this express purpose ; are given to affect his earthly course, to mark out the way in which he should walk, and the manner in which he should conduct himself, with a view to his final salvation. How, then, can his temporal course be fully shown without any reference to his spiritual privileges, duties, and destiny, when these affect every step of his progress, and give a colouring to every action of his life ? We repeat, If this can ever be done, it cannot in the period which we have been investigating. It would be unreasonable to omit the highest interests of man, and the brightest and best features of the Divine will concerning him, when detailing the account of his creation, and the rise and progress of primitive society. It would be absurd to attempt a correct and complete account of the early ages, without reference to the religious condition of mankind, and the manifested mercy and justice of God ; when, at various times during this very period, the exercise of these Divine attributes affected the condition of the whole world, almost exterminated mankind, and reduced society to its original elements ; when the exercise of these attributes produced results which will remain legibly written, both on the everlasting hills, and on the character of mankind, to the end of time. It would be unjust to endeavour to detail results, without a reference to their cause ; to chronicle the condition and character of man, and at the same time to conceal the greatness and goodness of God ; especially when Jehovah has, for our instruction, blended both so intimately together in his own holy truth.



None will more readily admit than we do, that the subject before us affords no proper place for the obtrusion of those discrepancies of opinion on theological subjects which now agitate and divide Christian communities. But it is equally certain, that it requires the exhibition of those great truths which constitute the principal elements of the economy of grace in connexion with their influence on human character ; and a detail of those Divine interpositions which so strikingly marked the history of this age.

We do not wonder, that infidels, who reject the light of revealed truth, ascribe the origin of man to accident, or to some absurd and unnatural excitation of material bodies ; or that they should look for the progenitors of mankind among monkeys or other brutes. There is something congruous and seemly in their placing the origin of man in the state to which their boasted philosophy is sure to conduct him. That those who leave man no hope beyond the grave should raise him from the mud ; that they who deny him an immortal spirit should ascribe his origin to a brute ;—this is not wonderful. But that moral philosophers, and Christian divines, should speak of the creation of the world as the result of natural causes, and of spiritual religion as though it arose from some manifestation of grace first made under the gospel dispensation, while the early history of man is supposed to be one of darkness and degradation ;—this is truly surprising ! Yet it has been often done ; and mankind, for many centuries of the earliest and most interesting portion of their history, have been described as ignorant of God, ignorant of the immortality of the soul, and entirely destitute of that religious knowledge and mental cultivation with which they were assuredly endowed from the beginning.

But, to whatever extent these erroneous speculations may prevail, or whoever may countenance their propagation by their influence and their learning, it is certain that they derive no support from the authentic ancient history of any primitive nation, and that the entire authority of holy scripture frowns condemnation upon them, in all their developments and results.



These being our views, the reader will not be surprised at our having made the Bible our text-book throughout the whole inquiry. If he has met with any passage in which we have seemed to depart from scriptural truth, he is requested to ascribe this to any cause rather than design. We have regarded holy scripture, throughout the entire investigation, as an outline map of the way. We have gone to the records of science, to the annals of ancient nations, have even waded through the impure fables of idolatrous religions, not for the purpose of adulterating the truth, but that we might be enabled to some extent to *fill up* the chart. The result has been, a deeper reverence for the Book of God, a stronger confidence in the uniform truth of its teaching, than we ever before entertained. In the whole range of our inquiry, we have not met with a single historic fact, related on any authority that would secure the assent of a candid and intelligent mind, which stands directly opposed to scriptural truth; while, on the contrary, the history and monuments of every nation afford evidence confirmatory of the scriptures. Isolated atoms of truth are furnished by every ancient people, which enlarge our information, and illustrate the teaching of the Bible; as do likewise the annals of science, and the earliest accounts of commerce, the first rise of empires, and the state and condition of every primitive people. The languages and written characters of China and Egypt never have been, and never can be, accounted for, except on principles which not only harmonize with holy scripture, but which are also taught solely in its sacred pages.

To the Bible we turn, as to the great source of all perfect truth, respecting the origin and early history of our world. Here we have the creation of this globe; its garniture, and its inhabitants; the progress of society and of the arts; the spread of wickedness, until, on account of its prevalence, the Flood destroyed all mankind, with the exception of one single family: and from this family we see a second race arise, until the world is re-peopled, and the ancient nations are planted in the most important countries of the earth. We have these subjects detailed, briefly, it is true, but by



the pen of inspiration. The information is limited ; but it must be perfectly true. We have more than this : we have the meditations, the purposes, the actions of Heaven in connexion with this world brought to light. The curtain is at least partially drawn aside ; angels descend, and converse with man ; yea, even God himself speaks to our race. These facts should not be overlooked. They are among the most sublime features in the history of humanity ; they show the designed character of our nature, our worth in the estimation of the Deity.

But, although we have paid paramount attention to the authority of scripture, we have not overlooked other sources of information. These, we trust, have enabled us to present a more full and complete view of this age than we could otherwise have done. As the information has been already given in detail, we shall not repeat it ; but direct attention to some prominent features, which show the advantage of this process, and also exhibit the fact previously noticed, that, when properly placed in juxta-position, these sacred and profane annals mutually illustrate and confirm each other. In effecting this, however, we invariably find that the scriptural account, though brief, is exact ; that the others, while they supply some important additions, have frequently to be corrected by the authentic statements of the sacred oracles.

The Comparative Table of antediluvian history may be first referred to. It will be observed that each column is collected from a separate source, and is supported by independent authority. Yet no person can look over the whole, without being struck with the remarkable agreement which these columns exhibit. Mere accident could not have given to the first man, in the remains of Sanchoniatho, and also in the Hindu records, a name which, in the respective languages of each, accords with the statement of Moses. The name of Eve, also, is literally rendered in the Puranas. We have the same result in every succeeding generation which presents to our view any subject of special importance. The piety of Enoch, the death of Cain, the occupation of Tubal-cain, the character of Noah, are points of coincidence which cannot be



mistaken ; while each account furnishes information respecting the origin of the useful arts, the progress of human society, and the corruption of religion, which, to say the least, is worthy the serious attention of every inquiring mind.

The Deluge stands out as a great and terrible display of Divine Justice. It proves that God will not look on sin with allowance, but will punish the guilty ; and it clearly exhibits the Divine mercy as connected with Divine judgment, and shows that he will not destroy the righteous with the wicked. Nothing more deeply marks the unscriptural character of the times in which we live than the various insidious attempts which have been made to explain away this fearful visitation. It is almost an insult to the understanding of a Christian, to call his attention to any refutation of the verbal criticism by which the sacred narrative of this event has been assailed. Of this we are sure, that biblical scholars of eminence, and possessing high Christian character, have, in respect of this fact, put forth canons of interpretation which, if generally adopted, would make the scriptures mean any thing or nothing. We have shown that the doctrine of a universal Deluge is not only taught in the Bible, but that it is attested by the history, traditions, and remains of almost every ancient people under heaven ; and have given as copious a selection of the general evidence which proves the certain occurrence of this direful catastrophe, as our limits allowed.

The Dispersion is another event of signal importance in the history of this age. This circumstance has been greatly overlooked by philosophers and historians in their researches into antiquity. Sir William Jones is an honourable exception to the general rule. He has furnished an ample and conclusive proof, that the present nations of the earth can be distinctly traced up to the three primitive tribes, and that all the existing languages are in like manner evidently derived from three parent stocks.

It is difficult to conceive of any infliction which, without the destruction of human life, could so effectually break up all the bonds of human society. This was its avowed object. It may be inferred, that, in antediluvian times, the entire



population radiated from the residence of the first pair, and, without separating into distinct bodies, covered all the surrounding districts. On this account the contagious influence of evil spread with great power and rapidity, and ultimately produced that accumulation of sin which occasioned the universal Flood. It also appears that it was the Divine purpose to counteract this contagion in the postdiluvian world, by commanding a regular separation of the people, so soon as a sufficient population was raised ; each family repairing to its appointed district. The whole tenor of antiquity supports this view of the case. The first great sin of the postdiluvian population was a united determination to disobey this command. They resolved to remain a united people, in defiance of the will of Heaven, and to erect a city and a tower, which should stand as the seat and centre of their association. This they “imagined to do ;” but the result proved that God will not be mocked, but will surely carry into effect the purposes of his will. He came down and confounded their language, so that they could “not understand one another’s speech.” This visitation rendered their separation inevitable ; and ultimately the respective tribes journeyed from Shinar, and took up their residence in different and distant districts. We cannot suppose that all of them were located at the same time, or in the same manner. Various and important arrangements must have been necessary for those long and tedious journeys ; and these would with some families require more time than would be necessary in the case of others ; while some might offer a more ready, and others a more reluctant, obedience. However this might be, it is an undoubted fact, that the history, religion, and language of several of the primitive nations bear incontrovertible evidence to the reality of the Dispersion.

We may also refer to our Synchronistical Chart of postdiluvian history, as showing the harmonious connexion of sacred and profane annals. The Chinese have undoubtedly extended the line of their kings to the time of Noah. But, when we take correct views of this fabulous part of their history, we find the origin of all the principal ancient nations



easily traceable to times which nearly synchronize with the date of the Dispersion. It is deserving of special attention that the conquest of Babylon by Assyria is soon followed by the subjugation of Persia by the same power. In all probability, these conquests were very different in their character and results from those of modern times ; yet, to whatever extent they were carried, they quite harmonize with the universal opinion, that at this period Assyria was a paramount power in Central Asia.

Upon this arrangement we are enabled to take a comprehensive view of the most important parts of the world during this period. The establishment of monarchies, their relative position, the existence of learning and science, the prevalence of trade, commerce, and navigation,—are all to be considered as prominent features of the age in which Job, Abraham, and Isaac lived. How mixed and strange to the mind of man are the thoughts which arise from the contemplation of such a picture ! We can ponder over it as the first chapter in the history of the present race of mankind. It is intensely interesting to throw back the mind to the infancy of Thebes ; to contemplate the organization of society, and the first efforts of the men who planned those all but everlasting monuments that crown the banks of the Nile ; to investigate the rise of the kingdoms of Babylon and Assyria, and to mark the developement of their power, and the progress of their commercial and political influence. China, Persia, and India stand in the same category ; and no intelligent mind can contemplate these without deep interest. The character of man is involved ; the origin of human society is the subject ; and every one feels a personal concern in the investigation. But this interest is greatly heightened by the knowledge that at the very time Heaven took a deep and special interest in the concerns of earth ; that Jehovah himself conversed with his creatures ; and all this when the earth felt the power of his arm, and Sodom and Gomorrah were made an everlasting monument of Divine vengeance. It is this which invests the subject with its true character. Man in his origin and early history,



the attributes of his mind, and their developement in actual life, present to us a noble object of contemplation; but when this is illuminated with heavenly light, and irradiated by a display of the purposes of God and the ministration of angels, we have its real dignity revealed, and its just importance defined.

It is this which induces us to take an enlarged view of the origin of man, and of the Divine purposes in his creation and future life; including a careful inquiry into the bearing of the religion of those primeval days upon the gradual developement and accomplishment of the great economy of grace. But in relation to this we confess the poverty of our intellect, and the limited range of our vision. Subjects are here presented to our investigation, and stand intimately connected with the origin of our race, and the best interests of man, during his subsequent history, which are so lofty in their nature, and respecting which we have so small an amount of information, that we cannot presume to speak with confidence, or to reason conclusively, concerning them.

But a careful comparison of the teaching of holy scripture justifies the opinion that, in the portion of eternity during which the Deity alone existed, his boundless benevolence led him to contemplate the creation of intelligent creatures, who should be partakers of his purity and happiness, and qualified to perform his sacred will, and fulfil his purposes. This was done; and heaven was inhabited with glorious hosts of holy angels, richly endowed with intellectual powers, and burning with pure and fervent love to their Maker. But here arose, as by inevitable necessity, an occasion for the origin of evil: It was necessary that creatures so created should (at least for a time) be free to offer unto God that unceasing devotion and obedience which was due to him, or to withhold it.

“ Such I created all the ethereal powers  
And spirits, both them who stood and them who fail’d,  
Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.  
Not free, what proof could they have given sincere  
Of true allegiance, constant faith or love,



Where only what they needs must do appear'd,  
Not what they would? What praise could they receive,  
What pleasure I, from such obedience paid?" \*

This freedom was granted, exercised, abused. Some of this heavenly host remained steadfast in their fidelity, and were confirmed in their happy state. Others violated their trust, fell into sin, and were therefore cast out of heaven into a place of punishment prepared for them; where they still cherished enmity towards God, and meditated further acts of rebellion against his government and majesty.

After this, it pleased God to design the creation of other rational and intelligent creatures, who, if faithful, were also intended to be partakers of heavenly glory. But on this occasion, although the object was the same, a course was adopted altogether different in its mode from that which was followed in the case of angels. The scene of *their* being was placed in heaven; they were all pure spirits, they were all created; each individual acted for himself without any external bias:

"Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell;"

and, having fallen, there was no remedy; nothing remained but everlasting punishment. Man, on the contrary, was destined to dwell upon the earth, which was formed to be the place of his residence, and the theatre of his action. He was created with an immortal and intelligent spirit, and a body formed of the earth, and animated with life. The whole human family was not immediately created; but two individuals, a male and a female, were brought into existence; and these were intended to be the progenitors of all mankind to the end of time. Further: it was determined in the councils of heaven, that, in the event of this human pair falling into sin, they should not irremediably perish, but that a great and glorious scheme of redeeming mercy should be applied to their case; which, involving a vicarious sacrifice, infinite in its atoning merit for the sin of man, and perfectly

\* MILTON'S "Paradise Lost."



applicable to his condition, should impart a rich amount of Divine influence, adapted to effect the enlightenment and renewal of a sinful heart, and present a way of access unto God, and a medium of restoration to the Divine favour through faith in the appointed Redeemer.

We do not wander into regions of speculation. The holy scriptures afford ample warrant for the assertion, that, upon this plan, the human race was called into being, that for these purposes the foundations of the earth were laid.

We have had to contemplate the accomplishment of this design in its earliest stages. We have seen how the earth was built up, and decked with beauty, supplied with all manner of living existences, and man formed in the image of God to rule over the whole, and accomplish in his life the purposes of his Maker. All this was done on a scale of surpassing magnificence. Every part of terrestrial nature displayed the infinite wisdom and power of God; and, most of all, man, lofty in his intellect, pure in his mind, holy in his affections, his ardent passions, and burning genius, all uniting in solemn devotion to the glory of his Maker.

Yet, even in these circumstances, humanity was polluted and depraved. Beguiled by the subtilty of the fallen spirit, the man and his wife transgressed the Divine command, and fell into sin. The consequences were fearful: guilt settled on the consciences of the transgressing pair; they became alienated from God, who was angry with them; and the Divine malediction rested upon the whole range of unconscious nature, on account of sin: the very ground was cursed for their sake.

But, although fallen, man was not irretrievably ruined: the pre-ordained scheme of mercy was applied; and even in the administration of judgment Jehovah announced purposes of grace; and, while expelling the transgressors from the seat of their innocence, he gave them a gracious promise of a future redemption.

We would not press improper comparisons respecting subjects only imperfectly revealed; but it does appear that



sufficient light is afforded by holy scripture to justify the observation, that, so far as the revelations of Divine truth or the deductions of reason can guide us, no work was ever undertaken by Deity which called forth so glorious a display of his infinite attributes as the creation and redemption of man. Neither the creation of angels, nor the Divine dispensations towards them; nor the creation of distant worlds of light, or systems of planets; nothing of which we have had any idea, or can form any conception; so clearly and fully exhibits the boundless range of the Divine perfections as the creation of man, and his redemption.

Here we have the most sublime displays of Divine wisdom; numerous problems are propounded, which eternity alone can fully resolve; so vast in their extent, so glorious in their subject, that "angels desire to look into" them. Here we have the most remarkable apparent contradictions and impossibilities, displayed, reconciled, and shown in efficient practical influence:—the Divinity mysteriously associated with humanity; the Almighty brought into wonderful connexion with humiliation and suffering; the availing efficacy of a vicarious atonement for sin; the plenary influence of the Holy Spirit, enlightening, guiding, controlling, and renewing the human heart, which still retains entire freedom of choice. Here we have an exhibition of Divine love, such as the whole universe beside cannot parallel. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son,"—gave him to suffering and to death. "HEREIN is love." Here also Divine power and wisdom unite to work out the most splendid results. Guilty souls are pardoned and justified; sinful spirits regenerated and purified; man, alienated from God, and writhing under the curse of heaven, is redeemed and saved. Human beings, having the sentence of death in themselves, yea, even going down into the grave, their bodies eaten by worms, entirely decomposed and scattered before the winds of heaven, are, nevertheless, if, while alive, they have laid hold of the atonement, and availed themselves of the offered redemption, secure of a perfect restoration to much more than their primitive felicity. The



curse of sin, the wreck of human nature, the evil of death, the desolation of the grave, are all coerced, controlled, overruled, made ministers of mercy and blessing ; and, by the ineffable wisdom and compassion of God, are made a highway to the glory of an eternal heaven.

The portion of time that has passed under our review contains the first part of the Divine dealings with man. It brings before us the Creation, the Fall, and the gracious dealings of God toward our race during more than three thousand years. That this period was distinguished by very remarkable incidents, the preceding pages show : a careful study of the particulars which have been detailed will convey a just view of this important subject. We do not repeat them, or particularly refer to them, but briefly apply these principles to the page of history which has been previously investigated.

In doing this, we shall, first, regard the application of Divine mercy to the case of individuals during that period ; and, secondly, consider the character of this gracious dispensation, as it respected mankind generally, and more especially as it stood connected with the grand economy of grace.

We have noticed the Divine purposes respecting man in his creation and in the provision of a scheme of redemption ; and have seen that, after the Fall, the human race began to multiply and continued to increase. When we also consider that this human population was intended to continue upon the earth many thousand years, in a state of continual change as to individuals, one generation dying off, and another rising up from infancy to fill their place ; we can easily conceive that it might consist with the purposes of the Divine wisdom to make a gradual developement of the economy of grace, so that its necessity, suitability, and efficiency might become fully apparent. But, however this might be, when it is remembered that this display of mercy was expressly designed for the salvation of man, we cannot by any means bring ourselves to believe that the first generations of mankind were left utterly ignorant of its merciful provisions, or without the



means of acquiring an interest in its blessings. As far as our investigation into the subject has enabled us to decide, it does appear that, for wise reasons, there was not made to man, immediately after the Fall, a full and complete exhibition of all the amplitude and blessedness of the scheme of redemption, but it is scarcely less apparent that man was not left entirely destitute of information respecting it.

The measure of light which was imparted was certainly intended to lead the individuals to whom it was given to the experience of salvation. It was necessary, therefore, that it should include every thing essential to that purpose. It did this: and we can now review the particulars of the case with advantage.

1. The first human beings and their immediate descendants were informed of the gracious provision which Divine mercy had made for their restoration from the ruins of the Fall. There might be in these communications much darkness, when compared with subsequent revelations. The means through which the Divine purposes were to be accomplished, might not be detailed; but the fact, that a scheme of mercy, a plan of redemption, had been provided, was distinctly announced, and on Divine authority. These persons had a clearly-attested revelation of Divine truth. We do not know all its contents. We know that it included the promise, that the "Seed of the woman" should "bruise the head of the serpent." But of the extent of the truth thus communicated, we are not informed. It was, however, sufficient to give man a knowledge of the merciful purposes of God toward him. This fact is not only clearly deducible from the whole scope of the subject, but it is attested by prominent events in the early history of mankind. Guided by this knowledge, men approached God in holy worship; they lived in hope, and expected and obtained mercy.

Besides the communication of this measure of knowledge, mankind, from the beginning, were made acquainted with the great vital principle of the entire scheme of redemption; namely, atonement for sin through vicarious sacrifice. The existence of the rite of animal sacrifice, and the effects attri-



buted, by New-Testament writers, to a proper apprehension of its character, and a faithful conformity to the Divine purpose in its observance, clearly prove this to have been the case ; and that the acquaintance which the early inhabitants of the world had with this great principle was not merely partial and theoretical, but complete, in respect of the object, and therefore real and practical in its results. Thus Abel offered an “excellent sacrifice, *by which* he obtained witness that he was righteous.”

But, again : in addition to these privileges, individuals at that time were the subjects of the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit. Faith, which is the gift of God, was exercised ; the Spirit strove with man. Those who were faithful to his teaching and influence obtained divinely-attested evidence of peace to their conscience, and *walked* in happy fellowship with God.

We do not wish to enlarge on these points ; but, in looking over the whole case, we think it important thus far to “justify the ways of God,” in opposition to those who labour earnestly for the purpose of wrapping this whole age in darkness ; and to show that, under this initial dispensation of grace, it was the privilege of individuals to possess Divine truth, to trust in sacrificial atonement for sin, and, guided and blessed by the influence of the Holy Spirit, to realize righteousness of life, and conscious acceptance with God.

2. We have now to consider this subject in its general aspect, and as it stands connected with the whole economy of grace.

In order to this, we may first refer to those religious institutions which arose in this age, and were to some extent peculiar to it. We may here notice animal sacrifice ; for although this was continued under the Mosaic dispensation, it was first appointed in the time of Adam. Its typical character is undoubted. It is equally certain that it was calculated and designed to cast light upon the nature and consequences of sin, and upon the only means by which it was to be expiated and purged from the human conscience. And this institution inseparably links the case of the first man



with the greatest glory of gospel times. The same principle is seen to run through the whole administration of grace. Through its operation, as a significant and efficient type, the scheme of redemption, although differing in the measure of developement, and varying in its external manifestations, stands out to our view as one and the same in all ages, from the days of the first man to the end of time.

Another peculiarity in the religion of this age is its family character. The head of every house was charged with the maintenance of religious worship, and the inculcation of religious truth, in his household. We admit that we have no express information as to this appointment. In this case, as in that of sacrifice, no authorized declaration of the origin of this institution has been handed down. But, notwithstanding this defect, the existence of it is undoubted. The general practice of the age, and the Divine testimony in the case of Abraham, will be regarded as sufficient proofs. It will likewise be admitted that there was something peculiarly simple and appropriate in this establishment at that day. Adam stood as the federal head of the human race ; he begat sons in his own likeness ; depravity was transmitted to his descendants. The subordinate author of their being, he was also the author of their impurity. What, then, could have been more appropriate than that he should be put in trust for the communication to them of the great remedy for sin ? He had received from his gracious Maker the promise of redemption, and he was charged with its communication to those intelligent creatures who owed their life to him.

This arrangement was as merciful as it was wise. It seemed to contain the surest guarantee that this truth and religion would be maintained and extended to every man. The duty was not only sustained by Divine obligation and charitable feeling ; it was also from the beginning associated with the most tender and powerful emotions of the human mind. Man was placed in circumstances in which, in addition to every other motive, he was impelled to maintain the worship, and disseminate the truth, of God, by his natural love to his offspring.



3. A third feature in the religion of this age, and one which merits notice, is the medium through which a knowledge of religious truth was imparted. This was by *vivâ voce* communication from father to son, or from one individual to another; and we have no information of any authorized written revelations. It seems to have been the Divine intention that religious truth should be universally communicated in a traditional manner. There was great apparent suitability in this mode. The father had to imbue his children with the truth which he had received from his parent. He had to do this by conveying and enforcing the precepts and doctrines of religion, and by the observance of all the duties which he had been taught. This mode of transmitting truth seems to have been peculiarly adapted to this state of religious society. It involved no monopoly of truth; it did not place religious knowledge in the charge of any particular class of men; the deposit was as universal as human families; and the plan was therefore eminently suited to meet the case of mankind.

The Divine dispensations in this age were therefore so arranged, that, although they appear in many respects much inferior to those which followed, they were, nevertheless, calculated to impart a rich amount of saving truth in a manner specially adapted to the state of mankind.

The melancholy truth has, however, been made apparent; all these gracious interpositions failed to repel the mighty energy of sin. We can easily conceive of human nature in such a moral condition, as, although fallen, might have rendered these gracious arrangements efficient for its restoration. This, however, was not the real state of mankind. All these, though adapted to meet the case, and intended to save man from sin, and lead him to holiness and heaven, which were the effects that they produced in some illustrious examples, were nevertheless inefficient to check the aboundings of iniquity, and to prevent the almost universal prevalence of evil.

This inefficiency was shown in the general extent of licen-



tiousness and violence among the antediluvians. Population increased, and appears to have existed in one unbroken mass. Sin prevailed ; and as parents neglected their duty, the knowledge of God became almost obliterated from the minds of their offspring. This state of things continued until the Flood swept them away, and left the family of Noah to raise a fresh race of inhabitants. Here it appears that a new element was introduced : As the wickedness of the old world seems to some extent to have arisen from the vast multitude of mankind being so closely congregated together, and thereby rendering the patriarchal institutions unavailing, it was then determined to separate the families of mankind, when a sufficient population for this purpose had arisen. Whether this Divine arrangement was delayed long after the appointed time, we are not informed ; but it is certain that it was violently resisted by a sinful and concerted scheme, in which almost all the existing population appear to have been partisans. This was miraculously defeated by Divine power, and the Dispersion enforced. But neither did this meet the case. Almost all the families which journeyed from Shinar seem to have imbibed, more or less, the principle acted on in the great rebellion there, and to have soon established monarchical institutions. The case of Job in Arabia may be regarded as a brilliant exception to this practice, as it stood connected with the knowledge and experience of true religion ; but it *was* an exception to the general rule. Kingdoms were founded almost every where : and although the great elements of religious truth for some time remained and were still recognised, they were not merely associated with many serious errors and idolatrous rites, but the latter were prevalent and influential.

In these circumstances Abraham was called to leave his country, and to journey with his family at the command and under the guidance of God. By this step two important objects were secured. First, the father of the faithful exhibited to the world a pure specimen of patriarchal faith. He maintained the primitive institutions, held the truth which had been revealed, and displayed to the world a living



pattern of their beauty and excellency. Secondly, by the continued journeying of this patriarch, he presented this example of faith and obedience to the most important nations of the earth. From Chaldea to Damascus, Philistia, and Egypt, this beautiful exhibition of the efficiency of the primitive faith was successively displayed. Notwithstanding all this, the world gradually sank deeper into spiritual darkness and practical wickedness. What a tremendous proof of the intense virulence of sin! Neither Divine truth nor Divine interposition, as manifested in the doctrines and institutions of the patriarchal religion, were sufficient to rescue the world from the dominion of Satan. "Sin reigned." It is not becoming in weak and ignorant man to speak too confidently concerning the administration of the Divine government: yet it does appear, from the foregoing investigation, that no course could by possibility have been taken which would so clearly and convincingly have set forth the fearful extent of the Fall, the terrible inveteracy of sin, as that course which was pursued, and which we have detailed.

Here we see the combined efforts of Divine wisdom, power, grace, and love, during three thousand years, repelled and resisted by the perverse and obstinate sinfulness of man. But,—what, if possible, is still more wonderful,—the patience of God is not exhausted; His love to man still burns with undiminished fervour; the riches of His wisdom have yet enlarged resources which are to be produced; other means are to be tried; God is yet to claim and exercise a more direct and extensive interposition in the earth; further displays of truth are to be revealed, other modes for their transmission to be devised and acted upon; and yet more great and glorious displays of the Divine attributes are to be put forth on behalf of mankind. To these important themes our attention will be directed in the next volume. Meanwhile, we earnestly recommend the serious reader to endeavour, from the religious review which we have taken of this first age of the world, to obtain a deeper sense of the evil of sin, a higher estimation of that



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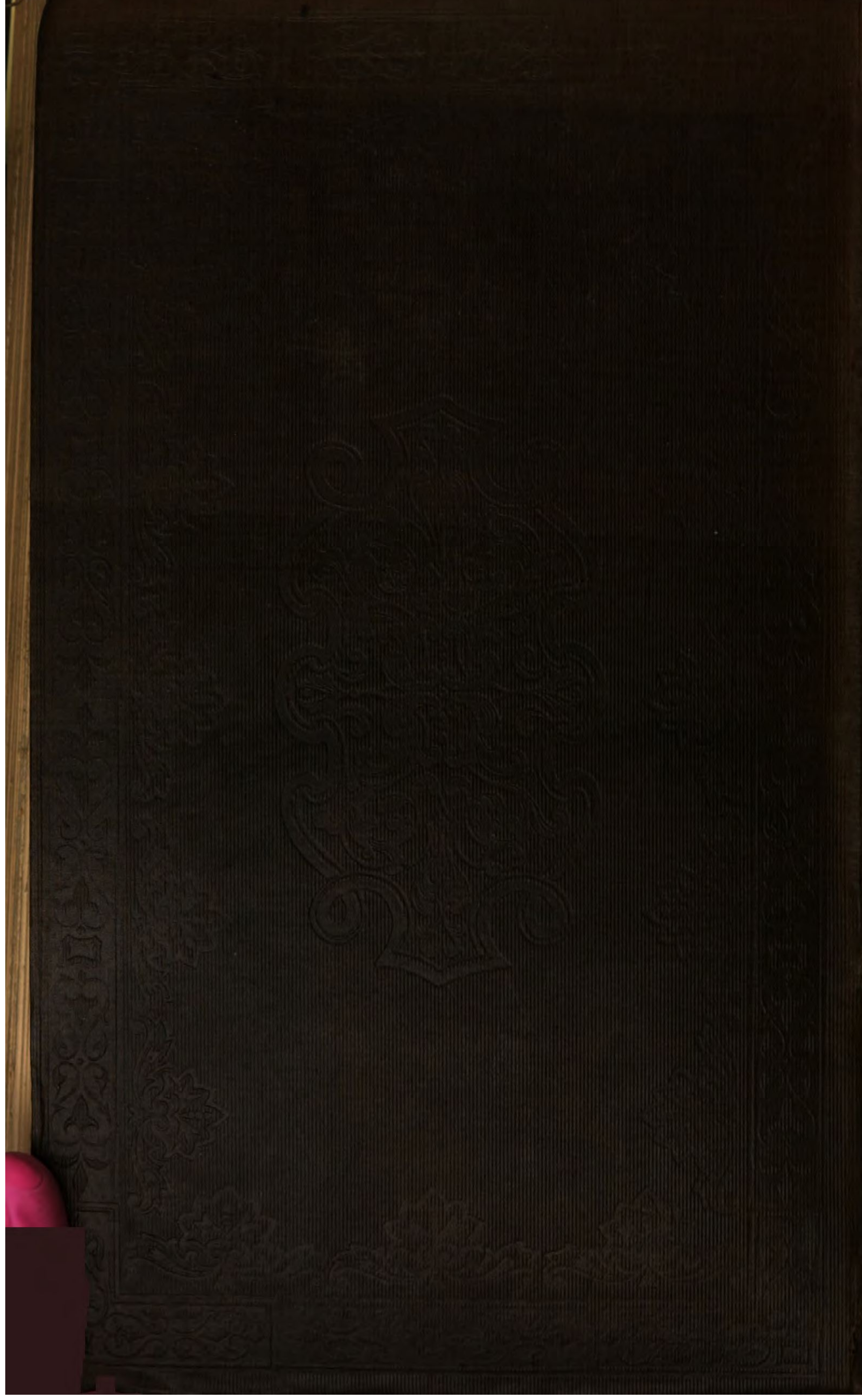














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